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# *Civilization—Past and Present*

VOLUME ONE



# *CIVILIZATION—*

*VOLUME ONE: from the invention of the fist  
hatchet through the discovery and conquest of the  
New World. Paleolithic Era to 1650 A.D.*

*A survey of the history of man—his governmental, economic,  
social, religious, intellectual, and esthetic activities—from the  
earliest times to the present, in Europe, in Asia, and in the Americas*

# *PAST AND PRESENT*

*by T. WALTER WALLBANK  
and ALASTAIR M. TAYLOR*

THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

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## *Preface*

A CHARACTERISTIC OF COLLEGE HISTORY TEACHING in the past two decades has been the growing prevalence and popularity of so-called survey courses, transcending the politico-nationalistic courses of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. These courses have been made broader in geographical scope and their political framework has been enriched by discussions of art, science, economics, literature, religion, and so on. The scope of such courses has usually been confined to European civilization.

This text has grown out of such a survey course given to all freshmen students at the University of Southern California. The purpose, simply, has been to offer to all students—engineering, commerce, arts, pre-medical, or pre-legal—some idea about how the world in which they live came to be.

Preparing a text adequate to fulfil that purpose has led to certain basic differences between this text and others. First, while its major emphasis is upon European cultures, *Civilization—Past and Present* also includes integrated discussions of the civilizations of the United States, of the British Commonwealth of Nations, of the Amerinds—Incas, Aztecs, Mayas—and of Latin America. Further, considerable attention is focussed upon India, China, Japan, and Oceania. The study of the orient, it is felt, is amply justified by the developments of the past few years, and especially the past few months, which indicate that the peoples of the east are destined to play an increasingly important role in the affairs of the world.

A second basic difference in this text is the greater amount of material on the twentieth century. In attempting to give students some idea about how the world in which they live came to be, it has not seemed wise to stop short of some fairly substantial statements indicating how the past lives on into the present. This phase of the historical continuum appears to have been neglected in survey courses.

It is the belief of the authors that the inclusion of non-European civilizations and the expansion of the material on the twentieth century has not resulted in a text any more difficult than those which have been restricted to European history. Indeed, the successful use of the text in preliminary form for three years by 3500 students at the University of Southern California bears out this belief. The totality presentation is its own incentive.

The concept of a simplified culture pattern, introduced in Chapter 1, can serve beginning students of history as a convenient analytical device. According to this principle, the essentials of all civilizations have been classified under six main categories (economic, home and social life, political organization, religion, thought and education

and esthetic or expressional activities). Occasional reference to this principle is made throughout the book, but students are encouraged to use the device themselves in quickly selecting the basic characteristics of any civilization or historical period. The culmination of this principle occurs at the end of the book. Each of the basic aspects of modern civilization is surveyed, and with it is given a recapitulation of the significant steps since ancient times which gave this particular part of the culture pattern its distinctive character.

**G**REAT CARE and numerous devices have been called upon to keep the material within the grasp of students. Minute details, no matter how interesting to the authors, have been ruthlessly expunged in favor of details unquestionably contributing to the business at hand. The material is blocked out to cover a course of approximately thirty weeks, a chapter per week (except Chapters 3 and 4, Chapters 8 and 9, and Chapters 10 and 11, which should be studied in pairs). Along with each chapter is a chronological table giving the students an overview of significant dates and events within the chapter. Each chapter begins with a short introduction indicating the major theme or themes of the chapter; and each chapter ends with a summary of main points. Preceding each main Part (e.g. Along the Banks of Rivers) a brief interlude is provided to reinforce in condensed form the essential points of past chapters and to indicate their connection with future chapters.

About 150 maps have been prepared, using new interpretive techniques. The aim has been to make the maps as simple and graphic as possible in order that the reader may at a glance grasp a single, distinctive idea. More than 350 photographs, drawings, and diagrams have been included, and these, like the maps, are not lumped together here and there but are placed directly in relation to the textual discussions which they reinforce and illustrate. Illustrations of architecture, painting, sculpture, and the minor arts, along with their accompanying text, provide a progressive discussion throughout the book, while miscellaneous illustrations of all sorts serve to vitalize the past.

Several features included at the end of the book will assist students in their study. A master chronology, showing events contemporaneous in various parts of the world, provides a digest of important dates that becomes useful to the students through constant cross-reference from the chapter chronologies. Vertical summaries in tabular form under each category of the culture pattern enable students to scan quickly the important developments from earliest times to the present. Finally, a classified and annotated bibliography suggests further reading on topics of particular interest.

In writing a survey of world history the authors could not, of course, rely upon their own resources, except in a few fields where they have developed special interests. Strong reliance, therefore, has been placed upon a host of scholars whose monographs span from Java Man to regionalism in American art. In every known instance where the phraseology of these helpful scholars has been used, a citation is included to indicate our indebtedness. These citations are indicated by superior figures (sources for which are listed by chapters at the end of the volume). Further, for each chapter there has been compiled a list of authorities whose works have been of particular value in plan-

ning and shaping the material, and to whom we are also indebted. Any lapses from this policy (of which we hope there are none) may be explained by the fact that one is not always conscious of the exact derivation of phrases or particulars of fact that turn up on the far side of the typewriter ribbon. But like S. MacGillvary Brown in his *Medieval History*, we quote the words of Lessing that he "should be poor, cold, shortsighted indeed, if he had not to some extent learned humbly to borrow foreign treasure, to warm himself at others' fire and to reinforce his vision by the glasses of art."

WHILE ASSUMING complete responsibility for all facts and interpretations throughout the book, the authors wish to express their thanks to the following persons for many penetrating suggestions at various stages of the work, either in manuscript, galley proof, or page proof: to Professor H. F. MacNair of the University of Chicago for checking over the material on China, Japan, and the Pacific islands; to Professor G. V. Bobrinsky of the University of Chicago for the material on India; to Professor Fay-Cooper Cole of the University of Chicago for Chapter 1; to Professor W. E. Caldwell of the University of North Carolina for Chapters 2, 5, and 6; to Professor James Lea Cate of the University of Chicago for Chapters 7, 8, 9, 12, 13, 14, and 15; to Professor Francis H. Herrick of Mills College for Chapters 16 and 17; to Mr. Hugh M. Cole of the University of Chicago for Chapter 18; to Mr. Francis J. O'Malley of Notre Dame University for the history of the Church.

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Acknowledgments for the latter half of this work will be found in the Preface to Volume Two.

We express our thanks to the following persons in particular for their work on the book: to Mr. R. M. Chapin, Jr., who besides drawing the maps, gave discriminating attention to the best possible ways to dramatize and clarify certain important geographical impressions; to Miss Charlotte Speight, for assistance in selecting art illustrations and suggesting methods of textual integration; to Mr. C. Barney Moore for the initial drawings for each chapter; and to Dr. Otto Bettmann for his diligent selection of pictures to enliven the past.

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PART ONE

*Along the Banks of Rivers*

CHAPTER 1

*The Universe, the Earth, and Man*

CHAPTER 2

*The Nile, the Tigris, and the Euphrates*

CHAPTER 3

*The Indus and the Ganges*

CHAPTER 4

*The Wei and the Hwang Ho*

## ALONG THE BANKS OF RIVERS

**W**HAT IS USUALLY known as history is a comparatively short period in the story of man, extending back from today about 7000 years. Early man, however, was on this planet nearly one million years ago. The span from that remote date down to 5000 B.C. is usually referred to as preliterate or prehistoric times. Man as yet had not perfected the art of writing, so that no written records were left with which historians can re-create his past. But our primitive ancestors did leave traces of their way of life which have enabled us to understand fairly accurately how they lived. In the first chapter, therefore, we will see how in the immense span of preliterate times man slowly created for himself and for his teeming descendants the fundamentals of civilization, such indispensable beginnings as tools, weapons, dwellings, and the domestication of plants and animals.

About 5000 B.C. the records of history become more readily understandable: The invention of writing, the use of metals, the advance of arts and crafts, and the organization of large political units signified that man was entering a new era of existence. Life became more complex and rich. Man extended his control over nature and began to use it for his own purposes. That momentous advance was not general all over the earth but was concentrated in a few great river valleys. This was no mere historical accident. The great rivers annually overflowed their banks, depositing a film of rich soil on the floors of their valleys. The well-watered soil produced abundant harvests. These in turn made possible a large increase in population. Cities and villages emerged. Artificial irrigation of crops, with the accompanying construction of dams and canals, necessitated group effort and cooperation among the people. In some localities everybody was required to help build the dikes and keep open the canals. Furthermore, dependence upon a wide network of interrelated canals demanded that all people within the area they served accept certain rules for the repair and defense of the works and the use of water. This naturally stimulated the development of governments to enforce what became known as law.

The rich surplus of crops produced in the river valleys encouraged trade and commerce. The merchant set up his stand, and ships began to carry wares from one area to another. Rivers have always been one of the best means of transportation, but they were especially important in primitive days when no good roads existed anywhere. From commerce came the exchange of ideas and inventions between people of different regions, a potent force in the shaping of

human destiny. It was to become increasingly potent later when men built ships strong enough to skirt the shores of the Mediterranean, and ultimately to sail the seven seas to every far corner of the earth.

**A**LONG THE BANKS of rivers, then, we look for our first great civilizations. When we find them, we see that they are widely scattered: Egypt grows beside the Nile; Mesopotamia sprawls between the Tigris and the Euphrates; India arises along the Indus and the Ganges; and China expands from the region of the Wei and Hwang Ho. These civilizations—all prolific in their gifts to mankind and so dynamic that two of them are still very much alive—evolved more or less independently of one another. Yet their similarities are at least as arresting as their differences. In all four areas, political systems were developed. The crafts flourished and commerce expanded. Striking intellectual developments were achieved. Alphabets and calendars were invented. Art and literature of extraordinary effectiveness were created. Religions and philosophies came into being to satisfy the inner yearnings of the people.

It is true that there were differences among these four early civilizations. They differed in their languages, literatures, and political and religious philosophies, though not nearly so much as we might expect, considering their almost complete isolation. These differences did not spring from variations in biological and psychological make-up. Fundamentally, in his mentality, his emotions, his continuing struggle against natural forces, his hopes and fears, man is very much the same kind of person no matter when or where we find him. We appreciate and sympathize with our primitive ancestors because we feel instinctively that we would have acted much the same as they did had we been living in their world. The differences that set one civilization off from another come not so much from human nature as from social and physical environment. We shall understand this better as we compare and contrast the four civilizations that lie immediately ahead.

We are at the beginning, then, of man's travels through the ages. White, black, and yellow, he developed in many parts of the earth, and we today are his inheritors. The account of his journey cannot be limited to Europe or any other single continent. At the outset we find him in Egypt, Mesopotamia, India, and China. In time we shall discover him pitting his puny strength and boundless audacity against the forces of every portion of the globe's surface. When we first find him, he is content to live along the banks of rivers; one day he will master the poles and the stratosphere.

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## THE BEGINNINGS OF CIVILIZATION

500 million years	Archeozoic ( <i>archaios</i> , ancient)	Probably non-shell, non-skeletal forms
900 million years	Proterozoic ( <i>proteros</i> , before)	Simplest plants (algae), worms, microscopic radiolaria, primitive marine invertebrates
350 million years	Paleozoic ( <i>palaios</i> , ancient)	Plants and animals, marine forms, fish, amphibian and reptilian vertebrates
125 million years	Mesozoic ( <i>mesos</i> , middle)	Great reptiles, dinosaurs, bees, butterflies, flowering plants
60 million years	Cenozoic ( <i>kainos</i> , recent)	
	1. EOCENE ( <i>eos</i> , dawn)	Predecessors of modern mammals.
	2. OLIGOCENE ( <i>oligos</i> , few)	Wide variety of mammals, few representatives of modern mammals
(Glacial ages)	3. MIOCENE ( <i>meion</i> , less)	Fewer living species
	4. PLIOCENE ( <i>pleion</i> , more)	More living species
	5. PLEISTOCENE ( <i>pleistos</i> , most)	<i>Pithecanthropus erectus</i> (Java Man) <i>Eoanthropus</i> (Piltdown Man) <i>Sinanthropus pekinensis</i> (Peking Man) Heidelberg Man *Neanderthal Man *Cro-Magnon Man: <i>Homo sapiens</i>
25,000 years	6. HOLOCENE ( <i>holos</i> , whole)	Modern races

*\*See page 12 for detail.*

## CHAPTER 1

# *The Universe, the Earth, and Man*



**A**BOUT one million years ago our earth, even then perhaps two billion years old, was the scene of a momentous event—the appearance of human creatures. Shuffling, ungainly, as yet without speech or tools, these ancient ancestors of ours gave little indication of their great potentialities. The many living creatures around them gave scant respect and attention to the newcomers whose descendants one day would build wings to speed them through the air, wheels to increase their gait a hundredfold, and deadly weapons to hurl against anyone foolhardy enough to stand in their way.

Since for hundreds of thousands of years early men could not write, they left no written records to chronicle their progress from savagery to partial civilization. But the geologist and archaeologist have come to the rescue. Unearthing fossilized remains of early man and also his tools and weapons, the scientists have succeeded remarkably in reconstructing the story of early man's development. The geologist in particular pushes his investigations even farther back than the one million years ago when the first man made his appearance. By a minute examination of plant and animal fossils preserved in the rock strata, the geologist penetrates to the very dawn of life—about two billion years ago.

In the twentieth century we are prone to overemphasize the superiority of modern man and scoff at the barbarous characteristics of our ancient ancestors, for we have invented radios, dynamos, and automobiles. We take for granted agriculture, speech, writing, and fire, and many other basic facts in our civilization that were initiated by early man thousands of years ago. Yet these are of much more fundamental importance than many of our modern inventions. They are so important that life would be incon-

ceivable without them. It was a series of momentous events when early man first fashioned the fist hatchet, the sire of all man's later gadgets and tools, when he succeeded in producing fire artificially, cultivating the first garden, and inscribing the first written message on a boulder for a friend to read.

### *Man and His Universe*

**Size of the universe.** Before commencing our story of man's progress from barbarism to civilization, it will be desirable to have some comprehension of the character of the road and the nature of the land on which the journey has been made.

The spinning globe on which mankind lives, the earth, seems to us a rather huge affair, having a diameter of nearly 8000 miles. But our sun, 93 million miles away, has a diameter of 864,000 miles. This flaming body with the earth and eight other planets which rotate around it constitutes what we call the solar system. Huge as it is, the solar system is but the center of a vast celestial system called by astronomers the Galaxy, which corresponds roughly to what we know as the Milky Way. The Galaxy is somewhat like a watch in shape, a mammoth disk with a thickness of 37,000 light years and a width of 300,000 light years. The distances involved in computing celestial space are so enormous that mere miles are quite out of place. The unit of interstellar distance is therefore the light year, that is, the distance covered by light in one year traveling at a speed of 186,000 miles a second. In other words a light year is equivalent to six trillion miles. One of our nearest stellar neighbors is Sirius, the Dog Star. Sirius is just eight light years, or 48 trillion miles, removed from the earth. It is estimated that there are at least one billion stars in the Galaxy, some larger than our own sun. Betelgeuse, in the constellation Orion, for example, is 27 million times as large as the sun which itself, we remember, is nearly one million times as large as our earth.

Immense as are the solar system and the Galaxy, they do not constitute the whole universe, for there are more distant galaxies. Within the past fifteen years astronomers have advanced the frontiers of their science to comprehend what are known as spiral nebulae. These are great clusters of stars, one of which, the Andromeda nebula, is 850,000 light years from the earth and has a diameter of 45,000

light years. This distant nebula is much smaller than the Galaxy but still constitutes an immense island universe.

When we reflect upon the immensity of the universe, the spatial dimensions of our earth appear infinitesimal in comparison. If we were to imagine the earth as a small ball one inch in diameter, on the same scale the sun would be a globe with a diameter of nine feet. And as we have seen, the sun is only a fraction the size of other celestial bodies. But we must contract even farther the stage on which man's history has been enacted, for of the total surface area of the world 71 per cent is covered by water and much of the 29 per cent remaining for land is barren and unsuited for human habitation.

As we commence our history of human civilization, a realization of the relatively infinitesimal size of man's domain, the earth, might tend to make human affairs seem insignificant and dwarfed. But small as it is, we can be reassured by remembering that man has really taken the universe captive by unraveling its secrets. The most staggering aspect of the universe—its immensity—is being progressively conquered by puny man's telescopes. And as the noted astronomer F. R. Moulton observes, it is not so much the tremendous size of the cosmos that is significant to man, "but that which holds him awestruck is the perfect orderliness of the universe and the majestic succession of the celestial phenomena. From the tiny satellites in the solar system to the globular clusters, the Galaxy, and exterior galaxies there is no chaos, there is nothing haphazard, and there is nothing capricious."<sup>1</sup>

**Origin of the earth.** Now that we have some idea of the huge dimensions of our universe, the question naturally arises, how did it originate? Taking the universe as a whole, the why and the how of its creation may forever remain an unsolved riddle. But some progress has been made in attempting to explain how the sun and its nine planets came into being. The study of the solar system gives us at least

a clue to the origin of that part of the universe most important to us—the earth.

The explanation commonly accepted today is called the Hypothesis of Dynamic Encounter, formulated about 1900 by T. C. Chamberlain and F. R. Moulton of the University of Chicago. In brief it suggests that

our solar system had its birth when the sun was approached by another huge star. The latter, through the operation of the law of gravitation, detached from the sun great chunks of flaming matter. The orphan masses from the parent sun gradually cooled and crystallized to become planets.

## *A Time Perspective*

**Age of the earth.** Time is one of the basic factors in a proper understanding of the evolution of civilization. A student of history must be equipped with the proper time sense. Thinkers in all ages have speculated upon the age of the earth. Some ancient thinkers, for example, considered it as eternal, as always existing.

We are indebted to the science of geology for giving us a convincing account of the age of the earth. In 1785 a Scottish scientist named James Hutton published his *Theory of the Earth*, proposing the hypothesis that the making of the earth had necessitated an immense period of time. Sir Charles Lyell in his famous treatise *The Principles of Geology* (1830), building on the investigations of Hutton, collected a mass of evidence showing that the earth is the product of a tremendously long period of evolution, which can be demonstrated by examining the stratified rocks of the earth's surface.

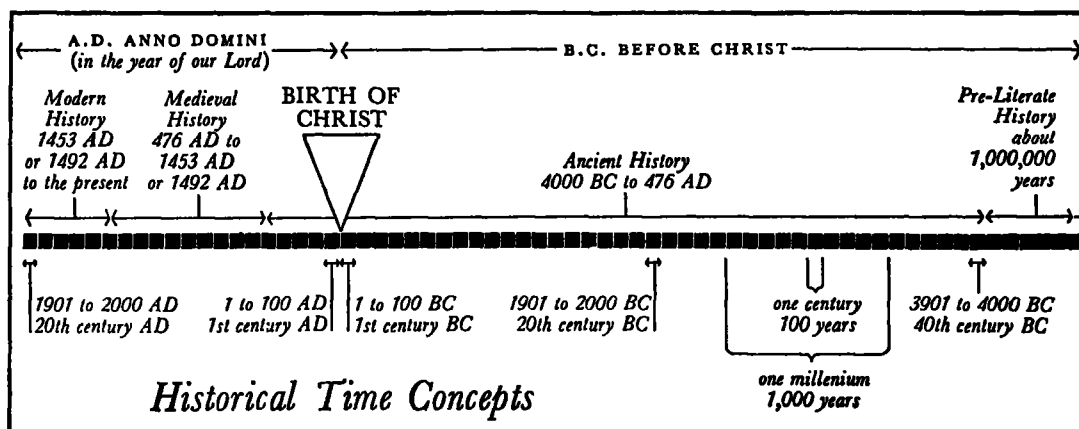
**The geologic timetable.** These strata, or layers of rock, constitute what is known as the geologic timetable. Geologists in the nineteenth century proved that the uppermost strata were much more recent in origin than the lower rock formations. This made possible

an understanding of the sequence of geological events.

No one area in the world presents a continuous and uninterrupted sequence of geologic formations from the oldest to the most recent. The record of the rocks in any one region is incomplete, as some strata have always been disturbed or obliterated. But by exhaustive study, by fitting a layer from one area upon a formation from another locality, a complete record of geologic time has been pieced together. Geologists now have an all-embracing succession of strata, the so-called geologic column, properly identified and fitted into a time sequence, which has a thickness of ninety-five miles. As a result of this work scientists now hold that the earth was born at least two billion years ago.

**Geologic eras.** The history of the earth is represented geologically by five great eras, corresponding to definite stratified rock formations in the earth's crust:

ERA	ESTIMATED DURATION
Archeozoic	500 million years
Proterozoic	900 million years
Paleozoic	350 million years
Mesozoic	125 million years
Cenozoic	60 million years



northern Europe and North America were ice-covered, as modern Greenland is today. There were four great advances of ice, each separated by an interglacial period. During their existence and the intervening iceless periods early man developed. Partly because the ice

sheets never reached the Mediterranean, civilization first began in the Nile valley and Mesopotamia. The icy cold of the Pleistocene period forced man to become a cave dweller. In caves he left utensils and weapons, to be discovered only in modern times.

### *The Development of Man*

**Java Man.** Thus far we have seen from fossil remains in the earth's crust how plants and animals have evolved. In addition to these traces of plant and animal life, scientists have found numerous traces of early man. In 1891-1892 Dr. Eugene Dubois, a surgeon in the Dutch colonial army service, discovered in Java several fragments of the skeleton of a manlike creature. These were the top of a skull, part of a jawbone, three teeth, and a left thighbone. From the geological formation in which the fossils were found, it was estimated that the creature lived in early Pleistocene times, nearly one million years ago. Paleontologists have developed amazing skill in reconstructing from minute and often broken remains the skeletons of primitive man. From the fossil fragments found in Java, therefore, scientists were able to reconstruct the skull of Java Man or, as he was named by Dr. Dubois, *Pithecanthropus erectus*. The skull as restored had a brain capacity of about 940 cubic centimeters, smaller than that of the Australian bushmen, the lowest type of living race of man, about 1240 cubic centimeters. The forehead of Java Man receded, there were very heavy ridges over the brow, and the bone of the skull was very thick. He decidedly belonged to the human family but not to the genus *Homo*, man as we know him.

**Pitldown Man.** In 1912 England was the scene of an important fossil discovery. For twenty years an amateur scientist named Charles Dawson, a lawyer by profession, had scoured the countryside for scientific specimens. In 1908 he had become interested in a gravel pit near Pitldown Manor in southeastern England. During the next four years he recovered from the pit portions of a skull, from which the whole skull was reconstructed. The skeleton was judged to be that of a female creature who lived in the first interglacial period, more than 600,000 years ago. Dawson's fossil woman was called *Eoanthropus dawsoni*, or Dawson's Dawn Man (Greek *eos*,

dawn + *anthropos*, man). The skull of the Pitldown Man shows a jaw that is practically chinless. The most interesting aspect of the skull is that it combines a massive, primitive jaw with an unusually large brain capacity, at least 1400 cubic centimeters, larger than that of a modern white woman. The unusually large brain capacity of "Dame Eoanthropus" explains why the fossil has been called the "first female intellectual." *Eoanthropus* is certainly not much younger than Java Man. Sir Arthur Keith reports that "she represents in his opinion a survival into early Pleistocene times of a primitive offshoot from the human stock which had attained to essentially human status early in the Pliocene period."<sup>2</sup>

**Peking Man.** In China between 1929 and 1938 more than twenty skeletons of an ancient race were unearthed about thirty-seven miles from Peking. These remains established the existence of another genus of primitive man called *Sinanthropus* (*Sin* from the Greek name for China) *pekinensis*. Like Java Man these early men had low, receding foreheads and massive brow ridges. The age of Peking Man has been the cause of much dispute. The American paleontologist Roy Chapman Andrews maintains that the Peking skulls go back one million years and are as old as Java Man. The Peking type, however, represents an advance over his contemporary in Java. We know that Peking Man was a maker of tools and a user of fire. More than two thousand of his bone and stone implements have been found. He was able to hunt with both craft and skill, to fashion crude but usable tools, and to organize his life so that nature in some degree was tamed and compelled to do his bidding.

**Heidelberg Man.** A sandpit more than sixty feet deep near Heidelberg, Germany, was the scene of another important discovery in 1907. Here a professor from Heidelberg University discovered a well-preserved human jaw eighty-two feet below the earth's surface. From fossil remains of the woolly rhinoceros and other

animal mammoths now extinct which were found with the Heidelberg jaw, the specimen has been identified as belonging in the first or second interglacial period.

**Neanderthal Man.** The best known of all extinct species of early man is the Neanderthal race. During the middle and latter part of the Pleistocene, or Glacial period Europe and western Asia were populated mainly by these men. Toward the end of their span of existence, which was perhaps 100,000 years, the fourth great Ice Age came on and forced them to seek shelter in caves. This explains why so many Neanderthal remains have been preserved. Neanderthal skeletons have been found in France, the Balkans, Gibraltar, Palestine—in fact, all around the Mediterranean and east Africa, in Russia and even Java.

Neanderthal Man was short and stocky, about five feet, four inches. Although he stood upright, his posture was not fully erect, and as he walked he gave a slouching appearance. He possessed a large brain, but certain of its centers were not yet fully developed. Nevertheless, the brain was for all intents and purposes like that of a modern man. With it Neanderthal Man became skilled in making flint implements and in using fire, and he had some kind of conception of life after death, for he buried his dead. Dominating Europe during the last interglacial period and the early part of the last glacial stage, Neanderthal men were suddenly replaced or absorbed by a modern species of man known as Cro-Magnon. Abruptly the Neanderthal race disappeared, although it is possible that some modern stocks such as the Australian bushmen still carry Neanderthal blood.

**Cro-Magnon Man.** The first skeleton of the Cro-Magnon race was found in Wales in 1823, but its importance was not appreciated until the discovery of five skeletons in 1868 in a rock shelter in France. Of that group of remains, those of the Old Man of Cro-Magnon were the most important. His stature was just under six feet, his brain capacity was larger than the average modern European's, his forehead was broad and fairly high, and his brow ridges were of moderate size. Gone were the chinless head, the receding skull, and the slouching gait of the various races of earlier men. Here at last was *Homo sapiens*. Making his first appearance some 25,000 to 40,000 years ago, Cro-Magnon Man had many tools and

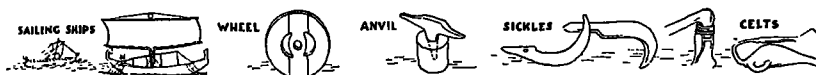
ornaments and had already begun to express his artistic sense in wall paintings and in sculpture. The race was not exterminated like other stocks of early man and thus can be considered the direct ancestor of the modern races of man.

**Man's origin and evolution.** Any discussion of man's origin and development is a delicate matter, touching as it often does upon a person's philosophical and spiritual convictions. Be this as it may, although the theory of evolution does not yet enjoy the full stature of a scientific law, it has yet gained the support of such a mass of evidence and the defense of so much expert opinion that no student of the development of man's civilization can afford to be ignorant of its claims. At the same time it is every person's unchallenged right either to accept or reject the theory as he sees fit. Many thinkers now maintain, however, that knowledge of the fact that man has succeeded in the face of tremendous obstacles in elevating himself from his once lowly estate to a position of at least partial civilization today is a thrilling and romantic story which should in no way detract from our belief in the nobility and dignity of man. On the contrary it should renew our faith that man in the future will likewise prove competent to solve his difficulties.

A contemporary anthropologist writes:

"One cannot conclude a volume of facts, reflections, and speculations concerning the course of human evolution without asking himself if there is any place for a guiding intelligence in this marvelous progression of organic events. However you look at him, man is a miracle, whether he be a miracle of chance, of nature, or of God. . . . That evolution has occurred I have not the slightest doubt. That it is an accidental or chance occurrence I do not believe, although chance probably has often intervened and is an important contributing factor. But if evolution is not mainly a chance process, it must be an intelligent or purposeful process."<sup>3</sup>

In reviewing our discussion of man's evolution, we should keep in mind that not a single authority maintains that man has descended from any species of monkeys. Rather it is asserted that man and other primates descended from a common ancestor, a primitive primate which long ago became extinct. For a long time all primates were one species,

**STONE AGE***The Development of Early Man***PALEOLITHIC** OLD STONE AGE—PERHAPS 1,000,000 YEARS AGO**Lower**  
**NEANDERTHAL MAN****Upper**  
**CRO-MAGNON MAN****NEOLITHIC** NEW STONE AGE—PERHAPS 10,000 B. C.**Lower****Upper****METAL AGE** ABOUT 4000 B. C. IN EUROPE**COPPER AGE****BRONZE AGE****IRON AGE**

but at a crucial stage in the evolutionary process a split occurred in the common stem. From then on the primate which was eventually to become man went one way in his upward climb, the other primates, another. There is still much debate as to whether human fossil types such as Java Man and Peking Man should be regarded as direct ances-

tors of man as we know him, that is, stages in the direct line of man's development. Prevailing opinion now holds that these early types should be regarded as collateral relatives, man-like stocks which split off from the main line of human development. The first direct ancestors of modern peoples were probably the Cro-Magnons.

*Tools and Art of Early Man*

**"Fossils of the mind."** The fossils of the body of primitive man add up to an interesting and important story, but they are not so generally significant as the "fossils of the mind," the implements or tools that early man invented. Thousands of these implements, or artifacts, have been discovered in the earth. The places where early men lived and where their debris collected are known technically as stations. The greatest number of stations so far uncovered have been in western Europe, and at some of these as many as 20,000 specimens of early man's tools have been found. Scientists have shown that the oldest strata in which fossils of man are found contain the most primitive skeletal remains and that subsequent geologic formations afford increasing evidence of the progressive development of

man's physical make-up. Early man's artifacts exhibit a similar evolutionary tendency; the older the strata, the cruder the implements.

Until a century ago little was known of early man's tools. Certain crudely shaped flints had been unearched as far back as 1690, but scientists of that day refused to admit they were man-made, but believed they were "thunderstones" that fell from the sky during storms. About a century later a Frenchman, Boucher de Perthes, braved ridicule to convince the world that these flint "thunderstones" were of human manufacture. After making careful excavations in northern France, he published his important findings in 1846. His contention that flints were the tools of early man was at first ridiculed, but within ten years it was generally accepted.

**Chronology of early man's history.** With the increase in knowledge of early man's implements have come attempts to work out a chronology for the prehistoric period. The chart on the opposite page represents a chronology generally accepted. The history of primitive man has been divided into the Age of Stone and the Age of Metals. The Stone Age has been further divided into the Paleolithic and the Neolithic periods (literally meaning the Old Stone and New Stone ages). The introduction of the bow and pottery in the Neolithic period marks it sharply from the preceding Paleolithic. There has been much disagreement among scientists as to the duration of these periods. The truth is that no general scheme of dates can be applied to primitive man all over the world. For example, Europe was entering the Age of Metals about 4000 B.C., but most American tribesmen were in the New Stone Age when America was discovered. Some modern primitives are still in the New Stone Age. The chart, therefore, refers particularly to primitive men in Europe.

**Lower Paleolithic history.** The basic tool of man in the Lower (early) Paleolithic period was the fist hatchet. This was almond-shaped, of flint, from four to ten inches long, and could be used as an ax, hammer, knife, or spearhead. In fact, it was man's tool-of-all-work. Crucially, it was, it can be regarded as the first sign of civilization. The fist hatchet was the tool that was to carry man to the modern machine that was to carry man presses, and dynamos. In the Lower Paleolithic period, the fist hatchet was the only tool of the primitive man, and it was used only by striking, but by the end of the

a better technique had been perfected which utilized chipping and flaking. In addition to the improvement in the making of flints, an increased diversity of tools is evident. Such instruments as scrapers, bores, crude saws, and awls were added.

During the Lower Paleolithic period man was a hunter and a wanderer, dependent upon the caprice of nature. He was able to exert almost no control over his environment. For food he had to follow the migrations of herds of game and the fowls of the air, supplementing such fare with plants, berries, and nuts. As yet he knew little about the use of fire for warmth. At first the climate was warm, but in the latter part of the period the advent of the fourth great ice sheet in Europe forced him to seek the shelter of caves. The protection from the elements which an inclosed, roofed space furnished, crude though it was, can be considered the first step toward the development of architecture. Architecture has been the outgrowth of one of man's most basic needs, shelter, and to a great extent climate has influenced its development.

Neanderthal Man dominated Europe. Looking back over 150,000 years we can visualize a group of our ancestors squatting at the entrance of their cave. We may be sure there was a stream nearby, for the lack of pottery demanded that Neanderthal Man be within easy reach of water. Not far away was a cliff, a source of flint, which was as important to these Old Stone Age men as oil wells, coal and iron mines, and forests combined are to us. Fire was all-important. We do not know whether Paleolithic man could kindle fire, but



The fist hatchet was man's earliest tool. The primitive striking, or percussion, method of making hatchet is illustrated at the right. The later flaking method, allowing more refinements, is shown at





*Cro-Magnon men and women, dressed in skins, are shown here building fires to warm their cave home, making tools, decorating the walls with animal figures. The hunter entering the cave is bringing home an ibex.*

once having procured it, from lightning or elsewhere, he kept the precious embers bright all the time. Fire was the best protection against surprise attack by wild animals. Clothing was a formless one-piece affair made of skins. Style and comfort had to await the invention of the eyed needle, though nearly all cave men wore ornaments made of teeth and shells.

Primitive and uncouth as the early people may seem, they were as industrious and courageous as any modern man. The presence of many cracked bones in their caves tells us that they were mighty hunters. Food was varied, but its supply was always uncertain. Neanderthal Man had a diet made up of acorns, chestnuts, honey, snails, cherries, game, birds' eggs, and fish. To this was added bones smashed into a paste. Much of the food was half-spoiled.

**Upper Paleolithic history.** With the coming of the Upper Paleolithic period, Cro-Magnon Man, the first race of modern man, appeared. The intense cold forced him to live most of the time in caves. This did not slow up his development; on the contrary, greater leisure apparently resulted in the invention of more and more tools, for many new artifacts

were devised. In addition to flint awls and polishers, eyed needles and spearheads were made of bone. Whistles and flutes were also made of the same material. Better weapons, especially the harpoon and the spear, gave Cro-Magnon Man superiority over the animal world. The shape of many flints from this period indicates that they were mounted on wooden handles, but the true ax was not introduced until Neolithic times. A most important discovery was made—the making of fire by rapidly rubbing two sticks together.

The first trace of religious feeling evidently appeared in the Upper Paleolithic period; there is evidence of human burial and funerary practices. The concepts of the soul and life after death were in the making. No one knows when speech began, but it probably originated about the time the first man-made artifacts were devised in early Paleolithic days. Cro-Magnon Man possessed a rudimentary system of vocal communication and perhaps experimented with written signs.

**Early art.** One of the highest achievements of the men of the Old Stone Age was their art. There is little or no trace of art in the Lower Paleolithic period. Neanderthal Man evidently

was not much of an artist, but his successor, Cro-Magnon Man, showed considerable ability. In the Upper Paleolithic period the cave man became a prolific artist. He carved in ivory, horn, and bone, engraved on the flattened surface of these materials, modeled in clay, and covered the walls of his caves with carved and painted designs.

Among the things the cave man left behind him were decorated tools, weapons, and ceremonial objects. His tools, though often decorated, were made for use, and the decoration remained within the dictates of function. For example, tools and weapons with animals carved on the handles have been found in which the animal shape is sensitively adapted to the shape of the user's hand. The bird decoration below shows such adaptation. Fragments of ivory tools have also been found in which line drawings have been scratched into the tool with a sharp instrument. This technique allowed decorations without projections to spoil the handling surface. The group of reindeer and fish below is an example of such line engraving. The carver had obviously observed the animals around him. With simple line and the suppression of non-essential de-

tails, the artist represented reindeer and fish in characteristic poses.

Early man's first attempts to paint and carve on the walls of his caves were halting and rather grotesque and consisted of simple contours of animals. He was also prone to copy the outline of his hand pressed against the walls of his caves. His next step was the enrichment of painted outlines of animals by the use of shading. The final development of Paleolithic painting was polychrome art, when the painter used red, black, and yellow instead of limiting himself to one color.

Cro-Magnon Man concentrated his efforts upon painting animals of all kinds—wolves, reindeer, horses, mammoths, and bison. Scant attention was paid to the human body. Perhaps the concentration upon animals can be explained by assuming a relationship between the art of the cave man and his belief in the supernatural. In making visual representations of animals in his caves, Cro-Magnon Man believed he could bring them under his control and thus make his food supply more certain. Occasionally he drew arrows piercing the sides of animals he hoped to bring home.

A few carved figurines have come down to



CARVED TOOLS OF EARLY MAN, DECORATED WITH BIR  
BOWL WITH GEOMETRIC PATTERN



"CHARGING BISON," CAVE PAINTING AT ALTAMIRA

us. They are usually of the female body, very primitive in design, and they were undoubtedly used in connection with fertility rites.

In 1879 Sautuola, a Spanish nobleman, was exploring a cave on his Altamira estate in northern Spain. His little daughter, who had accompanied him, suddenly cried, "Toros! toros!" ("Bulls! bulls!") The father turned around and saw his little girl pointing to the ceiling. He perceived a thrilling sight, a long procession of magnificently drawn bison. The following year Sautuola published his discovery in a little pamphlet, but archaeologists scoffed. The paintings were "too modern" and "too realistic." In a few years other caves in northern Spain and southern France yielded many additional examples of prehistoric art, and Sautuola was vindicated.

In the Altamira murals the outline of the animals was usually traced in black and then shaded with a mixture of red, black, and yellow colors. These paintings of animals, with their actions, attitudes, and skillfully drawn anatomy, show that man was observing keenly the world around him. Careful observation was needed to produce pictures showing essential movements of the animals rather than

stills. To call this art primitive

is a great mistake. Such a

charging Bison" at Altamira

essential lines and shapes;

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art furnishes an invaluable clue to many features of prehistoric life, for it constitutes the oldest form of record.

**Neolithic achievements.** The Paleolithic period was one of the most important eras of achievement in the history of mankind. It bequeathed to us fire, clothing, and some of the arts, basic elements in our modern civilization. But the life of Paleolithic man was still very limited. He had no cooking utensils, dogs, axes with handles, buildings, bows and arrows, or cultivated grain or vegetables. These all-important things, essential for the happiness and well-being of man, appeared in the Neolithic period.

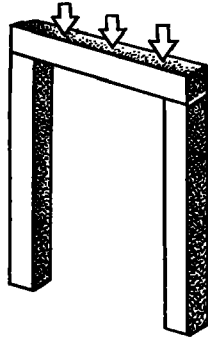
The chief European sites of Neolithic history are in Scandinavia, Switzerland, England, and France. The early Neolithic period was characterized by the introduction of pottery, an innovation which made possible the storing of water and the cooking of such new dishes as soups and stews. To pottery were added the bow and arrow, making possible long-range fighting and greatly increasing man's effectiveness in hunting wild game. The hewn stone ax was a valuable addition to early man's tools, and the number of new bone and horn implements increased rapidly. The dog was domesticated in the early Neolithic period. In all probability he was not captured and then tamed but at some time voluntarily attached himself to man as an easy means of securing shelter and food. Man's earliest "pooch" was "a parasitic hanger-on, a shy, tolerated, uncared-for scavenger."

**The beginning of agriculture.** Important as such advances were, the really striking achievements of Neolithic man came in the latter half of the New Stone Age. Grinding and polishing of flints produced fine daggers, poniards, and graceful axes. All-important was the domestication of plants, the beginning of agriculture. Such crops as barley, wheat, millet, pease, lentils, and flax were grown. Along with planting came the domestication of animals. At first animals were tamed; then a long time had to elapse before they could be trained to work in a harness. The final step in the process was continuous breeding, which produced breeds best adapted to serve the needs of man. The possession of cattle and crops gave man a stake to fight for, possessions that he must protect. At the same time the accumulation of goods encouraged attack. In

# POST AND LINTEL CONSTRUCTION

*is the earliest and simplest solution to the builder's problem of supporting weight above an opening in order to enclose usable space. Since the lintel must be in one piece, the width of the opening depends on the length and strength of the material available.*

*Weight of material above opening pushes down on lintel*



case a neighbor suffered bad crops or his food supply was destroyed by fire, there was an incentive for him to use force to obtain the food he lacked.

With the practice of agriculture man ceased to be a hunter or collector roaming over the countryside. A settled existence became possible. This resulted in the development of small villages, in which the first real houses appeared. Sedentary group living now came into existence. Men had to learn to cooperate with one another and to obey certain rules or laws which the group decided were essential to its safety and comfort; more attention had to be paid to the group leadership and organization which were to develop into what we now know as government. J. T. Shotwell, in evaluating the importance of the advent of agriculture, says, "The greatest social revolution of primitive mankind came about when man, settling on the soil instead of wandering, and so accumulating goods which involved foresight, began to calculate for a future."<sup>4</sup>

**Neolithic art and building.** The earliest wooden houses of which we have any evidence were dwellings in Neolithic lake villages in Switzerland. These villages were built on piles that were driven into the lake floor or into marshy ground. In one instance remains of fifty thousand piles driven at great effort to support one village have been uncovered. In the debris around the piles, tools of all kinds, house furnishings, wheat, barley, fish nets, and small boats attest to the advanced civilization of the lake dwellers.

The houses of the lake dwellers are the earliest known architecture in the world. When man had lived in caves, he was unable to locate his home as he wished, near a water supply or in a place easy to defend from animals. With the discovery of fire, caves undoubtedly became smoky and stuffy. There could be only one entrance, little ventilation, and certainly no natural light. So Neolithic man constructed his own shelter, giving it a roof, walls, holes in the roof for smoke to escape, and more openings for ventilation. In the lake dwelling was found for the first time the important post and lintel construction (see diagram). These basic problems of inclosed space, roofing, entrance and exit, ventilation, and lighting have always occupied architects.

Neolithic art is less brilliant than the Cro-Magnon creations. Neolithic man produced tools, but decoration was confined mostly to geometric patterns, often of great beauty and well suited to the shape of the decorated object. His lack of interest in animal representation can perhaps be explained by his greater control over nature. The shapes of his pottery are simple and pleasing. One of the basic determinants of any art form is the nature of the material. Clay is an extremely pliable material before it is hardened by heat, and clay vessels must be made so that the lower part can hold the weight of the top without warping or buckling. Neolithic pottery was probably made by the coil method—by building a series of clay coils one on top of another and then smoothing them together.



NEOLITHIC BOWL WITH GEOMETRIC PATTERN



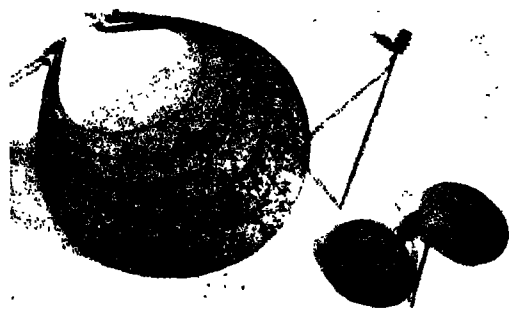
STONEHENGE: MONUMENTAL SETTING FOR EARLY MAN'S RELIGIOUS RITES

Although he was not much of a painter or carver, New Stone Age man was a great builder in stone. In connection with his religious rites he erected huge monuments called megaliths, meaning "large stones," often arranged in rows or circles. After the need for shelter, religion provided an early incentive for building. The most famous monument is Stonehenge in England.

**Other Neolithic achievements.** In addition to the new technique of making flint tools by grinding, the domestication of plants and animals, and the building of huge stone monuments, the later Neolithic period is important for the introduction of weaving, the making of the first rude boats, the start of surgery and

of specialized vocations, and the rise of commerce which centered around the bartering of such precious commodities as flint and jade.

**The Age of Metals.** The Neolithic period slowly came to an end about 5000 B.C. in the Near East and merged into a new period, the Age of Metals. The use of copper began in Egypt perhaps as far back as 5000 B.C. Copper needles have been found in the valley of the Nile dating back at least to 4000 B.C. These were probably the earliest metal tools fashioned by man. About the same time metal began to be used in Mesopotamia, a valley region lying between the Euphrates and Tigris rivers. As copper implements were soft and dull, a harder metal was desirable. It was eventually obtained by making an alloy of copper and tin. Bronze, as the new alloy was called, was introduced into Egypt about 3000 B.C. The use of metals spread from Egypt and Asia Minor to Europe where, in the southeastern areas adjacent to the Near East, copper began to supersede stone about 2500 B.C. Bronze was first used in Europe around 2000 B.C. The use of iron apparently had its origin in Asia Minor about 1300 B.C., whence it spread to Egypt and the general Mediterranean area. Just as the Stone Age is divided into two periods (Paleolithic, Neolithic), so the Age of Metals can be thought of as comprising



*This metal necklace, hairpin, and clasp were worn by a Bronze Age woman of northern Germany.*

the Copper, Bronze, and Iron ages. The date for the termination of one early period (such as the Neolithic) and the start of a new period (such as the Copper) depends upon what geographical area is considered. The Age of Metals began in the Near East at least 1500 years before its advent in western Europe. And even today, while we think of the Stone Age as being as dead as the fossils of Neanderthal Man, there are still many primitive people in various parts of the world who live in much the same way as the Neolithic cave man lived in Europe thousands and thousands of years ago.

Stone Age man in western Europe by 5000 B.C. had succeeded in making several splendid advances. We recall his introduction of agriculture, his domestication of animals, and his achievements in art. But Stone Age man everywhere was without the important skill of writing, the wheel, so indispensable to travel and transport, large sailing ships, large-scale government, and the use of metals. These very important fundamentals of civilization were first developed in Mesopotamia and in the valley of the Nile. The story of their development by peoples in the Near East will be told in the next chapter.

### *Man, the Culture Builder*

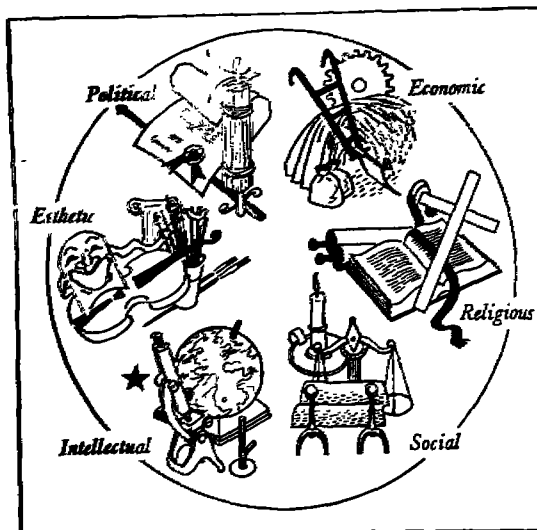
**Special attributes of man.** Man has always been very strongly influenced by certain primal needs and instincts. Drives in regard to food, shelter, and sex do much to explain man's history from earliest times to the present. At the same time it is proper to stress that history cannot be completely reduced to a study of man's physical needs, for man is much more than an animal. He is the one living thing who has developed art, religion, principles, and idealistic sentiments. Human history is a confusion of physical urges and spiritual aspirations. Man has always been concerned with certain basic physical problems revolving around self-preservation, but he has always found time to be a martyr, a saint, a creative artist—and sometimes a fiend and a destroyer.

It must be admitted that in many respects man is eclipsed in his endowments by the animals. He cannot compete with the strength of the elephant or the gorilla, the speed of the antelope, the bite of a shark, or the vision of a hawk. But despite these disadvantages man is in certain fundamental respects biologically superior to the animals. This explains his present position of overlord over all plants and animals which must serve his needs. Man has an upright stature that frees his arms from the task of locomotion. His hands are tool-making hands; they are much more agile and dexterous than those possessed by the apes. This is largely explained by the existence of the opposable thumb on man's hands. His vocal powers are also unique. Man's voice box has a much wider range of sounds than that of the animals, making speech possible. Finally,

he is fortunate in possessing unique mental powers. His brain capacity is twice as large as that of his nearest animal competitor, the ape. Even more important than quantitative superiority is the qualitative ability to reason and apply imagination. So important is the human brain as a factor differentiating us from the animals that it has been termed "the organ of civilization."

**The importance of culture.** In addition to biological superiority man possesses a cultural heritage which is passed from one generation to another. If this heritage were to be lost, man, despite his superior nature, would have a status little better than that of an animal. If, for example, a group of small children were taken to an uninhabited island, given a sufficient store of food to ensure their survival, and left undisturbed for about thirty years, at the end of that time they could hardly be described as modern human beings. An explorer finding them would think them the lowest of all savages. These unfortunate creatures would have grown up without any of the knowledge, customs, literature, and traditions of their parents. Being civilized, then, is based not only upon the possession of unique mental powers and tool-making hands but upon the opportunity to utilize mankind's cultural heritage.

This heritage is becoming continually richer. In a word, it is cumulative. Historians now stress what they term the "continuity of culture," a concept which affirms that every item in our civilization grew out of items in earlier civilizations and that these in turn had their origin in even more remote civilizations. Em-



phasis upon the continuity of culture is only another way of calling attention to our dependence upon the past.

**Culture defined.** Among anthropologists and other scholars the term "culture" is used as a synonym for social heritage. Culture refers to all the traits of a people—their government, art, family life, economic organization, and all other aspects of their life. Used in this technical sense, culture does not refer exclusively to a people's refinement, intellectual attainments, or artistic achievements. Culture thus defined is all-inclusive. All peoples have a culture whether they be Neolithic cave men, backward Russian peasants in the time of Peter the Great, sophisticated city dwellers in modern New York, or redskins in the days of Daniel Boone.

The cultures of such diverse peoples may seem on the surface to be poles apart; the Neolithic megalith has little in common with the modern skyscraper. But when these cultures are carefully examined, they all exhibit certain fundamental similarities. No matter where or when they lived, men have used tools, whether they be Stillson wrenches or fist hatchets, and have possessed some form of government, religion, family organization, economic institutions, weapons of warfare, and a code (written or unwritten) of law.

**The universal culture pattern.** As we progress with our story of man through the ages, our primary concern will be to grasp the main content and significance of a series of great cultures such as the Egyptian, ancient Greek,

Roman, Chinese, Indian, medieval European, and modern European. The study of those cultures will be made more meaningful if we keep in mind an outline which can be used to analyze the culture of any group of people anywhere at any given time. The accompanying chart presents such an outline in graphic form. Recalling this outline throughout the periods of history that we are to study will help keep the major trends in mind.

From one viewpoint there is no such thing as a culture pattern, because ideas and institutions are always changing. Such a view emphasizes the ever-changing manifestations of human culture. To be sure, the character and form of the elements in the pattern do change from century to century, sometimes rapidly and sometimes slowly, as men satisfy their wants and aspirations by different methods. But the pattern of culture itself, the framework of human living, has remained unchanged throughout the ages. Occasional reference to the concept may help provide a totality picture otherwise lacking.

The culture chart shows that human living can be reduced to six basic functions. The first is political organization. All people must provide for some kind of machinery which enforces rules deemed desirable by society. As these rules become crystallized, they generally merge into what is called law. It is also the concern of government to protect its people from aggression or to wage war itself when such action seems necessary.

Second, all societies must engage in economic activities. These are the things man does to provide himself with the necessities of life. They include agriculture, manufacturing, trade, banking, and the like. It is idle to ask which of the first two aspects of culture is the more important. Efficient government is an essential for a satisfactory economic structure, but no government can endure over a long period unless its people have been able to satisfy their basic economic needs.

"Man cannot live by bread alone." In all civilizations men have tried to reach out beyond the confines of human experience to something stronger and more noble than themselves. The activities of human beings in trying to solve the unknown and bridge the gulf between the material and the spiritual are called religion. Megalith, pyramid, ziggurat, mosque, and cathedral—in all ages

manifestations such as these show that religion is basic to society.

The most important social unit is the home. In this function of culture are centered marriage forms and the family. Regulated by certain rules enforced by society, marriage insures the propagation of the race. The home instituted by marriage provides the means for training and raising children, and generally offers, also, recreation, health, food, and protection to women.

Men are not only rulers, workers, worshippers, and parents—they are also thinkers. Man has from the first been a collector and organizer of information and a solver of problems. What we term education, philosophy, and science have existed, sometimes in crude form, from very early times. Taken together, these thinking activities make up another sector in man's cultural framework.

We have already observed that man was an artist even before he could till the soil. Love of harmonious and rhythmic sound quite early made man a bard, a creator of music. People in all ages seem instinctively to be storytellers and hence creators of literature. At first stories were crude and were passed by word of mouth from generation to generation, but with the development of writing and the enrichment of vocabulary, literature flowered into a complexity of drama, poetry, and prose. Cultural activities of this kind are called esthetic or expressional.

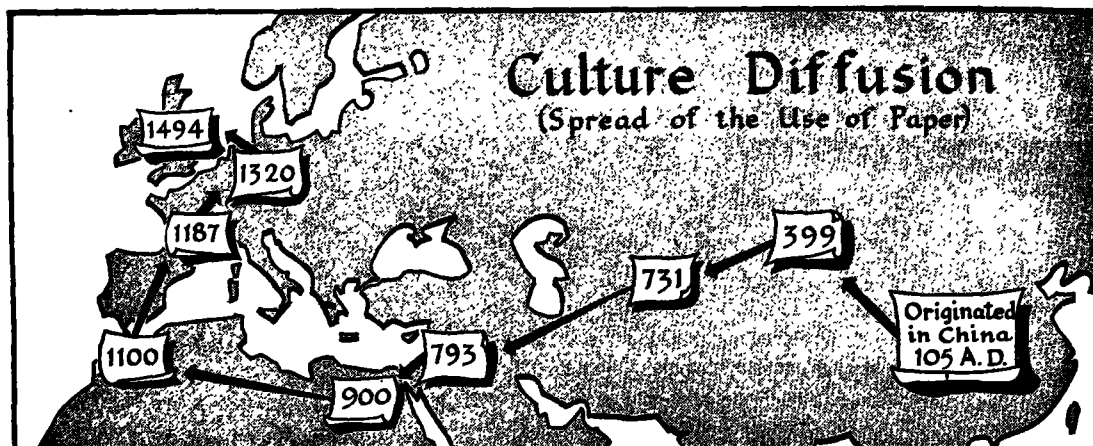
The fact that all cultures exhibit certain fundamental traits in common must not cause us to overlook the many differences in detail between cultures. The tools and methods of production of the African pigmy are far removed from the great industrial structure existing in the United States. The diminutive governments of African tribes with their petty chiefs and tribal councils bear little resemblance to the extensive governmental organizations that exist in the United States, England, or China. In many primitive societies a man to be a good citizen must have several wives, whereas in countries where Christianity prevails monogamy is the rule. Food provides some good examples of differences in culture. Some Africans enjoy putrid meat, and the French have a fondness for snails. Dog meat is a main item on the bill of fare in other places, and even now a few people in remote jungles include human flesh in their diet.

Such differences point to an important generalization. Although all groups of people are engaged in the same kinds of basic activities (worshiping, working, fighting, and so on), every group does these things somewhat differently. For example, each of the nine culture groups into which authorities have divided the North American Indians has its distinct pattern of life or culture. The North Pacific Indians, for example, had (and still have) a diet mainly of sea food, traveled mainly by boat, produced remarkable decorative art, built houses of cedar plank, and did not use shields in warfare. Another culture group, the Plains Indians, relied largely upon the buffalo for food, did not practice agriculture or fishing, traveled only by land, used a movable tepee tent, and had a circular shield. In traveling today from one country to another it is not so much the changes in language and in scenery that tell us we are crossing a frontier but evidences of hundreds of different culture traits: the way people dress, how they greet each other on the street, their menus, the architecture of their cities, and how they direct their automobile traffic. The United States today represents, of course, a definite culture area. Skyscrapers, our system of federal government, and mass education are a few traits that distinguish us from people in other culture areas. College football and swing music might be added.

*History as culture change.* When one speaks of history, there usually come to mind kings, battles, treaties, and statesmen. But there is another and perhaps even more important way of regarding history. It can be thought of as the study of the origin, development, change, and interaction of important cultures (such as the Egyptian, Roman, Chinese, and European). The question now arises, what factors explain the growth and interaction of such cultures?

*Diffusion as a factor in culture change.* One of the most important is diffusion, which is simply the adoption by one group of people of culture items belonging to another. The process of diffusion has exercised immense influence throughout history. From China many peoples borrowed the process of manufacturing paper, block printing, wallpaper, tea, and porcelain. The Europeans brought from the New World the use of the potato, tobacco, and chocolate. The Industrial Revolution began





in England, but in a short time machines were being put into operation all over the world. An American inventor developed the first practical submarine, but it didn't stay at home, as merchantmen in European waters often realized during the First World War. At present America is a very rich culture center, originating many culture traits that are being eagerly borrowed by other peoples. In Europe, Africa, India, and indeed almost everywhere, except when war has interfered, American movies have made their way, our automobiles have been in demand, and women have asked for shoes with American lasts.

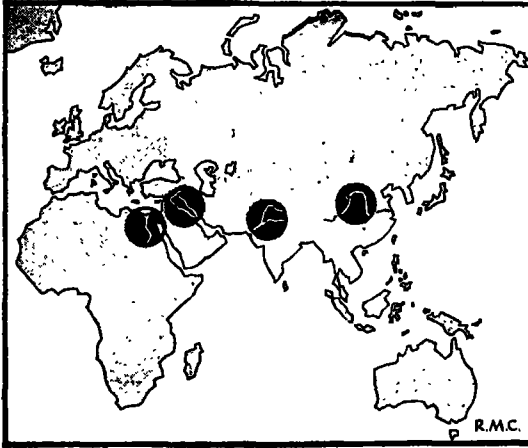
Culture traits are freely interchanged when direct contact is established between peoples. The colonists took from the North American Indians the use of maize, and the Indians in turn borrowed the use of the horse from the white settlers. The westernization of Japan began when Admiral Perry's expedition made trade and contact possible between that country and the outside world. Contact between peoples may be peaceful or warlike. Germany tries to force her culture upon the Czechs and Poles, and Japan attempts the same process upon the Chinese in the Far East. A study of history makes it plain that such attempts meet with obstinate resistance.

**Geography as a factor in culture change.** Another factor influencing the growth and spread of culture is geography. Climate, natural resources, and the formation of the land are important items in the life of a people anywhere. In the next chapter we shall note that all the first civilizations originated in protected and fertile river valleys, as the map on the next page shows. During the Middle Ages,

when the commerce of western Europe was centered in the Mediterranean, England occupied a peripheral position. The world passed her by. But with the discovery of the New World, when oceanic trade developed, England had iron, coal, and harbor facilities that gave her important advantages, and her rise was then rapid. Some scholars are so impressed with the importance of environmental factors that they believe geography to be one of the most important influences, perhaps the most important, in shaping the development of cultures. This school of thought is called geographical determinism. Much evidence can admittedly be brought forth showing the importance of the soil, climate, and natural resources in conditioning the culture pattern of a people. However important environmental influences have been in the past, it seems likely that their effect will become less and less marked in the future. Modern mechanical ingenuity and the technique of irrigation and scientific fertilization in agriculture have removed many handicaps imposed by nature.

As we study the history of civilization in the forthcoming chapters, we will note many instances where geography has played an important role in human affairs.

**Invention as a factor in culture change.** In addition to diffusion and geography, invention is an important source of culture change. Reflection on how man's mode of life has been revolutionized by such developments as the steam engine, anesthesia, and the automobile makes this abundantly clear. Invention, like all other aspects of civilization, illustrates the continuity of culture. The present builds on the past. A great invention does not come



into existence all at once. The development of radio is an example. The story of this invention would take us back several hundred years, and many scientists would be encountered, some of whom have long been forgotten. But all of these men, in greater or less degree, hit upon some truth or perfected some instrument that contributed to the body of scientific material out of which the invention could emerge. Of course the final link in the chain, the thinker who puts two and two together, must have the vision to appreciate the potentialities of the information he has at hand.

**Race as a factor in culture change.** The term "race" has many usages. It is used to denote one of several great divisions of mankind that can be readily recognized on the basis of certain physical characteristics. It is also used sometimes to refer to smaller groups of mankind such as the Finnish, French, or the Irish race. Occasionally people use the term to refer to very restricted groups, such as the Cornish people or the French-Canadians, and it is used sometimes to denote people who speak a distinctive type of language, as the Aryan race. Only the first of these usages has any biological validity, and even here the biologist will tell you he has his troubles. It is useful, however, to divide mankind into three major divisions, the Caucasoid (white), the Mongoloid (yellow), and the Negroid (black), each of which possesses fairly distinct anatomical characteristics.

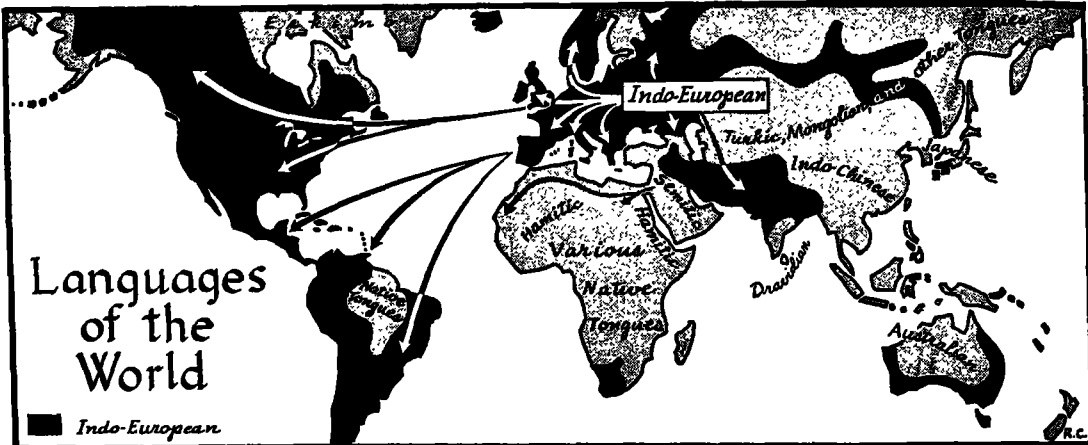
What connection, if any, exists between race and culture? Does history show that the most important contributions to civilization have been the product of certain superior races, while those biologically inferior have lagged

behind? The affirmative answer to these questions is all too commonly heard. However, a study of history shows that no one race has ever monopolized progress over a long period. No single race can be regarded as superior, all that can be said is that at one specific and relatively brief period in mankind's history one race may enjoy political supremacy and produce an impressive record for cultural creativeness.

Even though scientists tell us there is no such thing as a superior race, yet the factor of race does at times strongly influence the course of history. In order to gain support for his ambitions, Hitler indoctrinated the German people with the notion that they are racially superior to their neighbors. Unfortunately, it is not so important in human affairs whether a belief is actually based on truth as that people think it to be so and act on it. In recent times, although racial superiority is scoffed at in scientific circles, it is being used by such nations as Germany as one justification for an expansionist program.

**Racio-linguistic groups.** As we study the development of early civilization, it will be helpful to understand a method of racial classification based on language, as distinguished from the biological classification discussed thus far. Before recorded history a large group of nomadic peoples had their home north of the Black and Caspian seas. These people, speaking an Indo-European language and hence called Indo-Europeans, began a series of great migrations about 2500 B.C. One wing moved westward and passed into northern Asia Minor, Greece, and Italy. These nomads were the ancestors of the later Celts, Romans, Greeks, and Armenians. Another Indo-European group, the eastern branch, split about 1800 B.C. One migration made its way toward Mesopotamia and became the famous Medes and Persians; the other group moved to the east and settled in northern India. The last group is known as Indo-Aryan.

Another great body of people, called the Semites because they spoke a Semitic tongue, occupied the territory immediately to the south of the Indo-Europeans, stretching from Mesopotamia along the African coast to the western end of the Mediterranean. The most important Semites were the Phoenicians, Hebrews, Arameans, Assyrians, and Babylonians.



In ancient times Indo-Europeans and Semites were rivals for lands in the Mediterranean and Near-Eastern regions. A third, much smaller language group is the Hamitic. It includes the Egyptians and other people who live in northeastern Africa. Today, as the map shows, most of the world speaks Indo-European tongues. These have been spoken in Europe and India for many centuries. In early modern times European languages were carried by explorers to the New World where they rapidly replaced native Indian tongues.

**Culture lag.** Culture developments occasionally produce what is known as culture lag. All students of history know that the institutions of society are continually undergoing change. Now some parts change more rapidly than others. When the parts of a society do not mesh together in a harmonious pattern, when any institution has become outmoded in terms of other institutions in society, the condition is called a "culture lag."

Reflect how our old traffic laws designed for the "one-hoss shay" failed to keep up with the needs of an automobile age. When the automobile was introduced, many people could not conceive of any vehicle going faster than fifteen miles an hour, at least with safety. Consequently in many sections of the country there was quite a struggle to revise laws relating to traffic ordinances, and until the laws

enacted to take care of horse-drawn carts gave way to new laws in keeping with the speed of the modern automobile, a culture lag existed. The social status of women is another example of culture lag. For many hundreds of years, men considered women the weaker and less intelligent of the sexes. Even after women had demonstrated that they could make their own way in the world, even write fine novels, a culture lag prevailed in the matters of political equality. One of the last points of friction was the right of women to vote. Only since the last decade of the nineteenth century have women been enfranchised in various countries.

In recent times, serious instances of culture lag have been evident in the fields of politics and economics. Science and the Industrial Revolution have made the world an integrated unit, and all nations interdependent, yet old political boundaries act as obstacles to world cooperation. Many of the departments of our city and county governments, necessary when communication and transportation were more difficult, appear to have lost their usefulness. Yet so heavy is the drag of tradition and inertia that it will probably be a long time before more efficient and less expensive arrangements are made. As we follow the story of man through the ages, we will occasionally notice how lags develop and whether man has showed common sense in eliminating them.

### *Primitive Thought and Custom*

**E**arly man's non-material tools. When we left off our discussion of early man on page 19, we had finished investigating the material evidences of his life—his tools, monu-

ments, art, and other visible remains. But the nonmaterial aspects of his culture are fully as important as his material achievements. Such things as his beliefs, religious observances,

family life, and system of law and government are just as much tools designed to answer human needs as a fist hatchet or canoe. Unfortunately these nonmaterial tools of culture leave no fossils, and it is therefore exceedingly difficult to re-create early man's beliefs and social organization. The only thing the historian can do is assume that the various primitive peoples living today possess many of the customs and beliefs of our early ancestors.

If we find a native tribe today using what could be described as Neolithic tools, we infer that its legal system, religious beliefs, system of land tenure, and so on, are similar to those used by our ancestors in the Neolithic period several thousand years ago. Of course this inference may not be wholly correct. The culture of present primitives may have much in it that has been borrowed from superior civilizations, but notwithstanding this possibility it can be assumed that, in the main, the thoughts and institutions of primitive people today are similar to those of primitive man of the past.

The anthropologist has a great amount of material to work from. There are large numbers of contemporary primitive people in the western hemisphere living in much the same way as when Cortes and Pizarro came to the New World. There are also many such people in inner Asia. The anthropologist also finds the native population of islands in the Pacific a valuable storehouse for information about primitive customs. The same holds true for large sections of Africa. Of course many of the primitive people of the world have been killed off or displaced as a result of the expansion of western culture. The last native in Tasmania died about fifty years ago, the Newfoundland primitive disappeared a century ago, and most of the Indians in our own land east of the Mississippi were uprooted and scattered before the middle of the nineteenth century.

**Complexity of primitive society.** It is natural for people living in a sophisticated machine age to assume that primitive people possess little in the shape of law, government, education, codes of conduct—the paraphernalia of social organization. This is far from true. In many ways the organization of primitive society is as complex as our own. Rules regarding the role of parents, the treatment of children, the punishment of the evildoer, the conduct of

business, the worship of the gods, the education of the younger generation, the conventions of eating, recreation, and the like, have been carefully worked out, and effective methods exist to compel the individual, if necessary, to observe the correct usages.

**The elementary family.** Among primitive people the elementary family is a basic unit. As far as we know, no people exist who do not in some way formalize marriage. Family organization may take several forms. In monogamy, the usual family system, there is just one husband and one wife. In polygamy one man has two or more wives, and in polyandry one woman has several husbands. In many respects family relations among primitive people would seem to us very modern and reasonable. The wife is usually not the chattel of her husband, and the tribal law lays down carefully the respective duties, obligations, and rights of both parents. As in most societies, including our own, the male is apt to think of himself as the more important. We find this condescending note in many of the proverbs of primitive people: "Woman is a mat which must be beaten." "If a woman looks nice it is through her husband." (He had to foot the bill.) "Women like to be where there is money." Many tribes give the husband the right to chastise his spouse, but if this is done without cause the wife can appeal to her relatives or to the tribal council for redress.

The economic duties of wife and husband are also regulated by custom. The wife has the usual household duties and in addition is expected to take care of the growing crops. The husband does the heavy labor of breaking and preparing the ground for sowing; he hunts, participates in the tribal council, and takes care of whatever cattle he may have. Among some primitive people, the wife has the exclusive use of some of the family land. She can barter or sell its produce and the return is her own. This "pin money" can even be loaned to her husband, who must pay it back according to tribal custom. There is nothing "savage" about the treatment of children. Anthropologists say that frequently children are spoiled by doting parents. At an early age the boys and girls are given some duties to perform. The boys usually are given the task of herding the family cattle.

**The extended family.** In addition to the elementary family there often exists among

primitives what is termed the extended family. This is a circle of related people who usually trace their descent through their mothers. In the extended family, children call their mother's brother "father" and his sons and daughters their "brothers" and "sisters." The related people in this extended family are bound together by strong ties of mutual loyalty and helpfulness. It is said that in certain tribes the strongest bond between man and woman is not the marriage relationship but that which exists between brother and sister. Even after a woman is married she looks for guidance and protection, if necessary, to her brothers.

*The clan.* A third primitive social unit is the clan—a group of individuals who believe that they have a common ancestor and therefore are "of one blood, or of one soul." Although English scholars refer to father or mother clans, in America it is the practice to use the term *clan* when usage is made by the group of female descent, and *gens* when descent is traced through the male line. All members of a clan or gens are blood brothers bound to avenge any wrong inflicted on one of their number and to offer aid whenever it is needed by a member of the group.

Primitive people, like ourselves, generally do not sanction marriage between close relatives. Nevertheless, instances may also be found where the opposite is true, that is, where marriage within the restricted group is actually required. Many clans and gens are characterized by a totem. The totem is an animal or some other natural object which gives the group its name and emblem. The members believe that originally they sprang from the totem, which is revered by a complex pattern of taboos and other ceremonies. Totemism, while not universal, is found in many parts of the world. Nearly everyone is acquainted with the totem poles and totem masks of British Columbia and Alaska.

*The tribe.* The fourth circle in which primitive people live is the tribe, which may be thought of as a collection of clans or gens. Each tribe has a definite name, such as the Masai, Zulu, Kikuyu. Each has a common speech or distinctive dialect and a specific land area in which it dwells. Members of a tribe are just as proud of their own group's accomplishments as is the citizen of a modern state. It is said, for example, that Eskimos

refer to other Indians as "children of a louse's egg," and the Lakotapi, a North American tribe, have a saying to the effect, "We are the original people, better than any other group, and it is a matter of our goodness to grant rights of any kind to other people."

*Primitive government.* The governmental system of primitive people varies widely. In New Guinea there is little political machinery. Each group, or tribe, merely has a designated leader who is the mouth-piece of his fellows. In the islands of the mid-Pacific a form of central government exists which provides for gradations of rank such as noble, commoner, and slave. In Australia political organization includes a group of elders who wield governmental power. As for Africa, the usual form of government consists of a chief who rules by the consent and advice of the wise men. In certain areas there are large governmental political units under a ruler who maintains a standing army. Although many different governmental forms prevail among primitives, there seems generally to be an absence of what we might term political despotism. The chief must rule according to the unwritten law and custom of his tribe, and in the event of very serious decisions he must consult his council of elders. This strong representative element in the political machinery of backward people has led some observers to assert that political despotism runs counter to a very deep-seated instinct in mankind.

*Primitive law.* Among primitive people a definite code of law exists which has as its purpose the protection of society and, for certain crimes, the punishment of the evildoer. Unlike modern law codes most primitive law is civil rather than criminal. Many acts we regard as crimes are not considered by primitives as offenses against society. The basic idea of primitive law, especially in Africa, is maintaining an equilibrium. If a man steals some property from another, the economic equilibrium has been unjustly disturbed. The victim is satisfied, however, if the thief restores what he stole or its equivalent. When equilibrium has been restored everybody is satisfied. The thief according to our modern legal ideas goes unpunished. Even in the case of a killing the tribal authorities do not intervene, but the culprit must make adequate restitution to the relatives of his victim. There are,

however, certain acts which constitute such a danger to the social group that they are thought of as crimes and thereby merit some penalty from the tribal government. Some examples are treason, witchcraft, and incest. Such acts cannot be settled by the payment of compensation. They come under what we would term public law, and the punishment meted out by the authorities for these crimes is usually death.

If such misdemeanors as stealing do not result in punishment as long as restitution is made by the culprit, how is law and order maintained among primitive people? Behind the rules of the tribe stand the religious beliefs of the group. It is believed that anyone who continually breaks the law will be haunted by the annoyed spirits of his ancestors and will also suffer the curses of the tribal gods. Equally potent as a deterrent to anti-social behavior is the existence of collective responsibility. When an offense has been committed the culprit's kinsfolk must accept the responsibility of seeing that proper restitution is made. If a member of a clan gets into trouble too often, his fellows will regard him as a social nuisance and a downright economic liability; they will accordingly outlaw him from the group or execute him. For minor offenses primitive people use with great effectiveness the weapons of ridicule and ostracism. Fear of the supernatural, the force of collective responsibility, and the weapon of ridicule insure respect for the customs and laws of the tribe. These tribal sanctions are quite as effective as our modern police forces and prisons.

**Primitive religion.** Perhaps the strongest single force in the life of primitive people is religion. It colors every aspect of their activity: the birth of children, rainmaking, initiation into the tribe, seed time and harvest, marriage, death, and war. Religion goes back to the dawn of history. Man has always been filled with awe and wonder of nature. Among primitives, with little knowledge of science, there has always been a deep feeling of helplessness and of weakness in the face of such inexplicable phenomena as thunder, lightning, disease, and death. The urge to associate oneself with and to reverence the mysterious forces dominating human affairs led to what we call religion. The first stage in religion, "animatism," is characterized by belief in a vague supernatural power. This is superseded

by what is known as "animism," in which the vague spirit world is broken down into specific spirits, some good and others bad. Although primitive people often possess the concept of a supreme good God and a supreme evil spirit, these exist in a supernatural world of many lesser deities. Monotheism, the belief in one god, was developed by modern peoples, although primitives often believed in a single supernatural force.

**Religion and magic.** Closely associated with primitive religion is the practice of magic. Magic may be defined as a technique directed at obtaining the aid of supernatural forces to control nature and time. Professional rain-makers, for example, are said to have the secret of appealing to the spirits who command the weather; diviners are in touch with spirits which give them the clue to the future; medicinemen can supply charms which give immunity from disease or protect one from accidents. Witches and wizards practice the magic most feared by primitives—witchcraft. The witch can throw a spell upon a victim which will bring about his quick death or inflict upon him a calamity such as the loss of his crops or the death of his cattle. If the victim learns that he has been bewitched he will immediately repair to a witchdoctor, who will give him an antidote to cope with the malevolent forces in league with the witch. The primitive unquestioningly believes that witchcraft exists. Even today in many parts of Africa there are reported cases in which a native believes himself to be bewitched, resigns himself to his fate, and dies.

**Basic attitudes.** An examination of primitive society reveals several basic characteristics. The first is the extreme conservatism of the group. There is little sympathy for new ideas, and effective deterrents—such as ostracism or ridicule—are utilized against any individual who broaches new beliefs or criticizes the gods. There are numerous prohibitive rules called taboos whereby certain actions are absolutely forbidden. Taboos are sanctioned by the gods, and few individuals ever dare go against them. This subordination of the individual mind to the group mind results in a social solidarity which enables the tribe to survive but at the same time makes primitive society static, with little opportunity for social development.

In addition to the extreme conservatism of primitive peoples, the group rather than the

individual is emphasized. In many tribes land is held in trust by the elders, who allocate it to the various families. This land cannot be privately owned. In the event a member of the tribe returns from a long absence away from the group he still can claim his rightful share of the land. Unlike our highly atomized society, with every individual seeking to advance his own interests (often at the expense of the group), the primitive man must always think of group and family interests rather than of his own. If a man runs short of food he can appeal to his many blood brothers in his extended family or in his clan for assistance. It has been said that one would never find a tribesman starving; rather, one would find a whole tribe or village starving. This strong feeling of mutual helpfulness is one of the most admirable features of primitive society.

**Primitive economy.** In Africa today thousands of natives live in a culture more akin to the Stone than to the Machine age. Dozens of tribes live in villages of crude thatched huts without windows or sanitary arrangements. The African is often a farmer but his methods are primitive. He practices a form of shifting cultivation in which he burns down the brush, tills the new soil for a few years, and then seeks a new patch to burn and till.

The native, in most cases, hardly knows what a money economy is. His monetary standard is the cow. In many tropical areas the cattle are increasing rapidly, and overgrazing is destroying the fertility of the soil. European governments who rule Africa are beginning to wonder how the number of cattle can be reduced — how the natives can be taken off their "cattle-money standard."

**Education.** In a crude but effective manner African society imparts to its young people the skills and information deemed essential for proficient adulthood. There is

no classroom. A group of boys squat on the ground in a clearing between the huts and listen to advice from a mighty hunter or sober words from a dignified elder. Graduation time comes when the young boys and girls go through their initiation ceremonies. For several weeks the young people are given intensive instruction and finally are inducted into the adult membership of the tribe. This last "class" in African education is accompanied by many strenuous exercises reminiscent of college fraternity rites, designed to impress upon the young people what their elders think they should know.

**Disappearance of primitive culture.** What is true of the natives of Africa is valid for the general pattern of life of primitive people all over the world. Generally speaking, the backward peoples of the world are emerging from the crude culture of their ancestors. The mission and governmental school, the advice of the medical and agricultural officer are all doing their part in this work. Perhaps the day will come when it will be almost impossible to find human reminders of the time when men lived in a remote Stone Age.

Meanwhile our contemporary primitive peoples are living in a culture not far different from that of early man. It is thus possible for us to reconstruct the life of our early ancestors. Blood relationship, then and now, was the basis of human organization. Such organization consisted of several social groupings, notably the elementary family, the clan, and the tribe. Little political machinery existed among primitive tribes. Government was simple and law enforcement was not usually the concern of society. Injuries were taken care of by the payment of compensation to aggrieved parties. Extreme conservatism dominated the primitive group. Men had to tread perpetually in an accepted circle of custom.

### Summary

In order to understand that the past lives on in us, we must have some idea of what its most important contributions are, where these first originated, who was responsible for their creation, and how and why they developed. Many accounts have been concerned only with the what, where, and who of history. We will find it much more fascinating and meaningful if we can get some notion of the why and how, or, in more technical language, the nature of the historical process. Something of the importance of culture diffusion, invention, geography, and race in history is indicated in this chapter, as an

introduction to the historical process. Behind the scenes of coronations, elections, treaties, and wars, the factors determining culture change have in the past revolutionized the lives of men without fanfare or publicity and continue to do so today. As we progress with our reading, there will be numerous opportunities to recognize the influence of these and numerous other factors in history.

In the rocks of the earth the miraculous story of the unfolding of life is revealed. By studying fossils we know approximately when life first arose and how it evolved from simple and undifferentiated varieties to complex and advanced life forms. Man too is a part of this evolving stream of life. Fossils have been discovered showing that man was in the process of evolution for about one million years and that he finally appeared as we know him some forty thousand years ago.

More important than these fossils of the body are the fossils of the mind, the tools man has created to satisfy his many wants. The first artifact, the first hatchet, was a crude implement, but during the Stone Age there was a steady improvement in man's tools, indicating an advancing culture. Organic evolution was thus paralleled by cultural evolution.

The first great period of man's cultural evolution was the Paleolithic. It saw the invention of numerous tools, such as the harpoon and spear, and the manufacture of fire. Above all it was the period in which the first art was created, an art far from being crude, as carved tools and mural paintings show. Building on these foundations, men of the Neolithic period created the first houses, boats, and great stone monuments called megaliths, and introduced weaving, agriculture, and the domestication of animals.

Having traced Paleolithic and Neolithic achievements we come to the end of the first great stage in human progress. In its way it was just as important as the Age of Pericles in ancient Greece, the Renaissance at the close of the Middle Ages, and the Industrial Revolution in modern times.



## EGYPT AND THE FERTILE CRESCENT: 5000 B.C.—333 B.C.

### EGYPT

<b>5000-3400 B.C.</b>	<b>Pre-Dynastic Period</b> Lower and Upper Egypt First union (43rd century)	Transition from stone to copper; domestication of plants; irrigation; writing; plow; calendar
<b>3400-525</b>	<b>Dynastic Period</b>	
<b>3400-2475</b>	<b>THE OLD KINGDOM</b> 6 dynasties of pharaohs	Famous pyramids; Age of Metals; monumental sculpture
<b>2475-2160</b>	<b>THE FEUDAL AGE:</b> Civil war	
<b>2160-1780</b>	<b>THE MIDDLE KINGDOM</b> 11th and 12th dynasties National unity restored	Classical age of literature; excel- lence in all arts
<b>1780-1580</b>	<b>HYKSOS INVASION</b> —Alien rule	
<b>1580-525</b>	<b>THE EMPIRE</b> Reign of Aahmes, liberator Under Amenhotep, empire reaches its height	Civilization, political power at zenith (18th dynasty); temple of Karnak
<b>525</b>	Persia conquers Egypt	

### THE FERTILE CRESCENT

<b>4000-1750 B.C.</b>	<b>Old Babylonia</b>	
c. 4000-3500	Sumerians develop a culture in plain of Shinar	Well-established city life; cunei- form; use of metal
<b>2500-2300</b>	First Semitic empire: Sargon	Temples; reliefs; epics
<b>2300</b>	Restoration of Sumerian city rule	
<b>2000</b>	Second Semitic empire in Mesopotamia	
<b>1948-1905</b>	Rule of Hammurabi	Hammurabic Law Code
<b>1750</b>	End of Old Babylonian culture	
<b>1750-700</b>	<b>The Age of Transition:</b> Syrian and Palestine period	
<b>1500</b>	Hittites strong in Asia Minor	Use of iron
<b>1400-1200</b>	Hebrews settle in Palestine	
<b>1200-700</b>	Era of small nations: Phoenicians, Arameans, Hebrews	Alphabet; trade; colonization; cul- ture diffusion
<b>c. 960</b>	Kingdom under Solomon	Monotheism; height of influence
<b>910</b>	(Assyria conquers Babylonia)	
<b>700</b>	Advent of great empires	
<b>700-600</b>	<b>Period of Assyrian Dominance</b>	(Zoroastrianism founded: <i>Zend-Avesta</i> )
<b>722</b>	Sargon II: New dynasty	Highest development of art; pal- aces; library at Nineveh
	Assurbanipal: Greatest extent of empire	
<b>612</b>	Chaldeans destroy Nineveh	
<b>600-539</b>	<b>New Babylonia:</b> Empire of the Chaldeans	
<b>604-561</b>	Nebuchadnezzar ruler of Babylonia	Hanging gardens; irrigation; astron- omy
<b>539</b>	Persians capture Babylonia	
<b>539-333</b>	<b>The Persian Empire</b>	
	Conquests by Cyrus, Cambyses, Darius	Efficient provincial administration;
<b>334-331</b>	Alexander the Great conquers Persians	military roads; Zoroastrianism

## CHAPTER 2

# *The Nile, the Tigris, and the Euphrates*



ALL peoples, whether they are savage Masai in east Africa or sophisticated city dwellers in metropolitan New York, have a more or less complex culture. We have already seen in Chapter 1 that the term culture used in this sense describes the sum total, or pattern, of any people's governmental, economic, social, religious, and intellectual institutions, no matter whether its people are primitive or advanced. But though culture is a characteristic of all peoples, the same cannot be said of civilization. People are civilized only when they have succeeded in evolving an advanced and complex culture pattern which rests upon a complicated social organization and extensive control over nature. Civilization has been defined as "that stage of life in which there takes place the organization of sedentary folk into towns and cities, in order that life may become safer, more cultured, happier, and more productive of those elements which induce what is optimistically called progress."<sup>1</sup> The growth of civilization has been mainly associated with the rise of town and city life, as the above definition indicates. In fact the term civilization is derived from the Latin word *civilis*, which refers to *civis*, meaning citizen. Complex social organization has developed not among nomadic peoples but rather among dwellers in cities, where the circumstances of people living close together and depending on one another for fulfillment of needs require cooperation and a high degree of organization.

More specifically, civilization necessitates the existence of a device whereby the experience and the accomplishments of one generation can be passed on to the next. This becomes possible to a significant degree only with the development of writing, which enables the cultural heritage to become cumulative. There must also exist an advanced

material culture guaranteeing people some degree of physical comfort and security from famine and want. Freed in this way from anxiety over uncertainty of food supply, man is given the necessary leisure and tranquillity of mind to turn to artistic and intellectual achievement. Thus art, architecture, literature, philosophy, and science are developed.

While Paleolithic and Neolithic man had been making striking advances in the direction of civilization in western Europe, parallel progress was being made in the Near East, near the Nile and in Mesopotamia. Our discussion, however, has been concentrated upon the advances made in Europe, for there we have more evidence of early man's progress than in any other area in the world. The rate of advance of Neolithic and Paleolithic man apparently was about the same in Europe and in the Near East until about 5000 B.C., when progress was accelerated in the latter area and Europe was left far behind.

In Egypt, the land of the pharaohs and the pyramids, we will see how man succeeded in creating a flourishing civilization along the banks of the Nile. Then we will turn east, leave north Africa, cross the great desert of Arabia to another ancient river valley, the Tigris and Euphrates, extending north from the Persian Gulf. Here a succession of important peoples rose and fell, and each made important contributions to civilization. This was the home of the Sumerians, Assyrians, Babylonians, and Persians.

A narrow band of fertile land connects this second great river home of ancient civilizations with the coast of the western Mediterranean. The connecting corridor, called the Fertile Crescent, played an important part in ancient history. It was the highway for trade and for the mass migrations of peoples. In this area such peoples as the Phoenicians, Hebrews, and Arameans played their parts in history.

### *Cradles of Civilization*

**Advent of civilization.** It can be said that a culture becomes civilization and recorded history dawns between 4000 and 3000 B.C. in what is known as the Ancient Near East. In the latter part of the nineteenth century, Egypt was regarded as the most ancient center of civilization in the Near East. But discoveries recently made at Ur in Mesopotamia have led some scholars to regard the Tigris-Euphrates river valley as the cradle of civilization.

Other archaeologists have recently entered a new champion for the honor of originating civilization—India. In 1924 in the province of Punjab, a very ancient civilization was discovered at Mohenjo-Daro in the valley of the Indus River. This civilization was at its height when Cheops in Egypt was building his first pyramid. Presenting evidence of highly developed city life and bronze culture, perhaps Mohenjo-Daro is the oldest civilization yet discovered. When the spade of the archaeologist has turned up India's soil as thoroughly

as it has the soil of Egypt, it may uncover civilizations much older than those which once flourished along the Nile.

It is also a common belief that the oldest civilization originated in China. No one, however, knows how old Chinese civilization is, and as yet archaeological investigation in that country is only in its infancy. According to our present knowledge, it would seem that Chinese civilization originated nearly two thousand years later than civilization in the Near East.

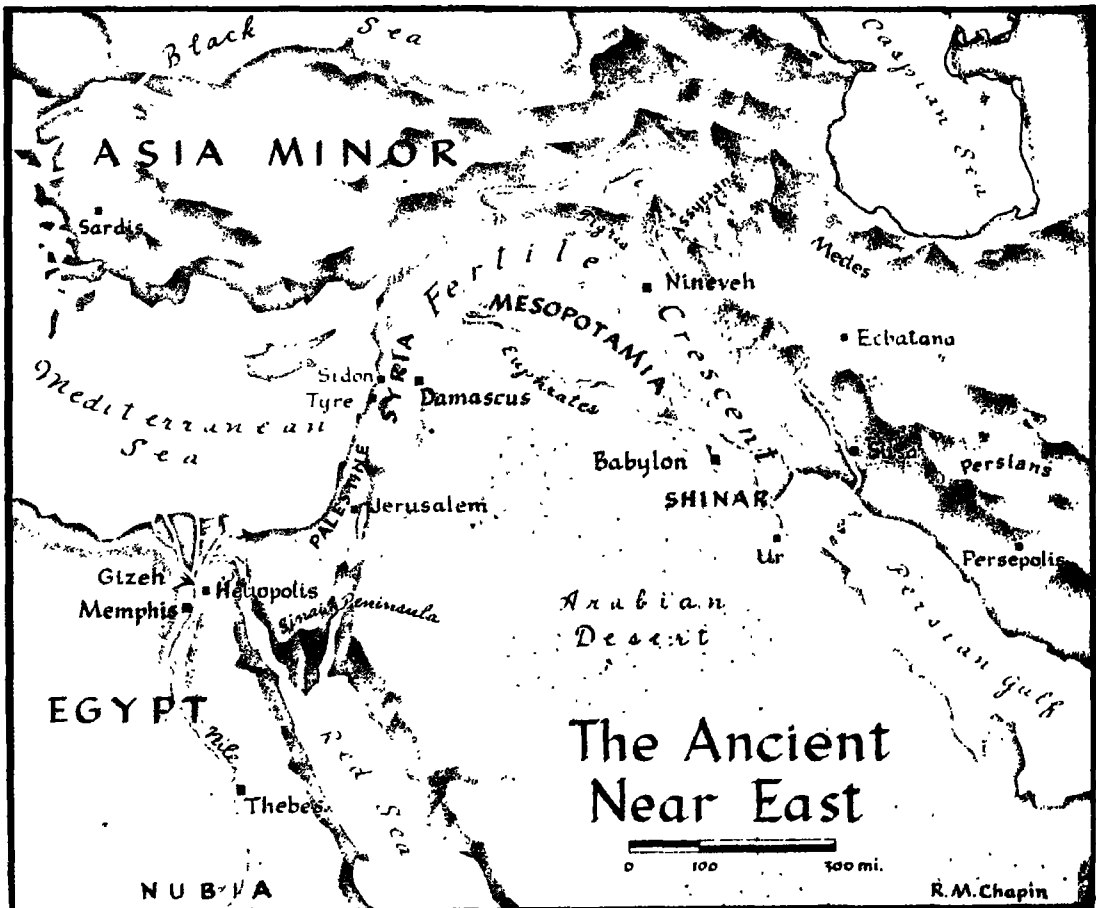
While at present the weight of evidence gives the palm to Egypt and Mesopotamia as the cradles of civilization, it must be admitted there is no certainty in the award.

**Early civilization a river product.** In the origin of civilization geography played an important part. All early known civilizations—Egypt, Mesopotamia, India, and China—began in river valleys (see map, page 23). This was no historical accident, especially in

Egypt and Mesopotamia. The great rivers annually overflowed their banks, depositing a film of rich alluvial soil on the floors of their valleys. In regions where rainfall was sparse, great pools were created in order to provide irrigation facilities. The well-watered soil produced abundant harvests. These in turn made possible a large increase in the population, and small cities and villages arose. Artificial irrigation of crops with the accompanying construction of dams and canals necessitated group effort and cooperation among the people. Everybody was required to help build the dikes and keep open the canals. Furthermore, dependence upon a wide network of interrelated canals demanded that all people within the area they served accept certain rules concerning the repair and defense of the works and the use of the water. Of necessity there developed a government whose word was law for the entire area served by the canals.

The rich surplus of crops encouraged trade and commerce. The profession of merchant was born, and caravans and merchant vessels began to carry wares from one area to another. Contact between peoples led to the exchange of ideas and inventions from one to another. Culture diffusion, already discussed in our first chapter, became more and more an instrument of progress. We can understand, then, the importance of rivers in the growth of civilization.

Water has always exerted an important influence upon human affairs. Scholars sometimes refer to it in dividing civilization into three great epochs: (1) the fluvial, centered along the banks of rivers and in fertile river valleys, (2) the thalassic, focused in great inland seas such as the Mediterranean, and (3) the oceanic, in which man utilizes the great oceanic stretches of water as bonds of contact making the world one unit. Until the time of Greece, civilization can be regarded as



essentially fluvial. European civilization then became thalassic, centering in the Mediterranean, and remained so until the fifteenth

century. Finally, with the age of exploration and the voyages of Columbus and his successors, civilization became oceanic.

### *Civilization Dawns along the Nile*

**Egyptian culture and history.** The life span of ancient Egypt extended from about 5000 B.C. to 525 B.C. During that period the Egyptian pattern of life evolved from a rather primitive Neolithic culture to a flourishing civilization in which pharaohs ruled with absolute sway, agriculture and commerce thrived, a noble art flourished, and mighty temples and monuments were constructed. Then decay set in, and the once proud land of the pharaohs passed under the rule of the Persians in 525 B.C. For more than two thousand years a succession of alien peoples—Romans, Greeks, Arabs, and Turks—ruled over Egypt. The most recent foreign rule was that of the British, whose direct control ended only in 1937.

The dates of Egyptian history have not been definitely established, but the following chronology is roughly accurate. Egyptian history before 3400 B.C. is called the Pre-Dynastic period. The era after 3400, when the land was ruled by one pharaoh, is known as the Dynastic period. The latter includes three periods of greatness and two interludes of retrogression: the Old Kingdom (3400-2475 B.C.), followed by the transitional Feudal Age (2475-2160 B.C.); the Middle Kingdom (2160-1780 B.C.), ended by the Hyksos domination (1780-1580 B.C.); and the Empire (1580-525 B.C.).

**Pre-Dynastic Egypt.** Egypt passed from stone to copper culture in the Pre-Dynastic period. Artifacts have been discovered in tombs which go back as far as 15,000 B.C. These remains show that the early Egyptians passed through the main divisions of the Old and New Stone ages. Progress was apparently rapid, and soon the people lived in crude houses, had weapons of flint and copper, and engaged in agriculture. Examination of grain and husks found in the stomachs of corpses in ancient tombs has shown that as early as 10,000 B.C. the Egyptians had developed superior strains of barley seed which could be easily cultivated and which produced heavy yields. The early Egyptians, whose race has not yet been conclusively ascertained, wore linen garments and were especially remarkable for their artistic skill, particularly in pottery. Their polished

red and black ware was never surpassed by their descendants, even in the periods of highest Egyptian accomplishment.

During the long Pre-Dynastic period, largely because of the necessity for cooperation in building canals and irrigation works, the small political units gradually merged into larger ones, until finally two kingdoms, Upper Egypt in the south and Lower Egypt in the north, were created. These date back perhaps to about 5000 B.C. and were probably the earliest nations. The process of national unification was further advanced in the forty-third century B.C. by the union of these two kingdoms under the leadership of the king of Lower Egypt. With its center at Heliopolis, Egypt's first capital, the union endured for about eight hundred years. Several noteworthy accomplishments were made during the period of union. The introduction of the plow increased the acreage it was possible for a man to cultivate, and the first national irrigation system was evolved. Progress was made in writing and in the invention of papyrus and ink. Another important achievement was the creation of the first calendar, which, it has been claimed, goes back as far as 4241 B.C. If true, the date for the beginning of the Egyptian calendar is the oldest in history.

**The Dynastic period.** The first union of Egypt was not permanent, and for a time each kingdom led a separate existence. About 3400 a strong leader arose in Upper Egypt. According to tradition King Menes effected the second unification of the two kingdoms and established a new capital at Memphis at the head of the Nile delta. After Menes a long succession of ruling houses, or dynasties, controlled the affairs of Egypt. The second union of Egypt marks, therefore, the beginning of the Dynastic period and the advent of the Old Kingdom, which can be regarded as the first great epoch in Egyptian civilization.

**The Old Kingdom.** During the period of the Old Kingdom the Age of Metals was definitely inaugurated in Egypt. Mining expeditions were sent to the nearby peninsula of Sinai to obtain copper. Trade was also devel-

oped. Boats were sent to the coast of Syria to obtain timber which was needed in Egypt for the construction of boats, houses, and furniture. Important advances were also made in industry, for papyrus-making was begun, the potter's wheel perfected, glass manufactured, and beautiful jewelry made by expert craftsmen.

One indication of the advance in civilization during the period of the Old Kingdom is its pyramids. The first of these gigantic monuments was constructed by the architect Imhotep for a pharaoh of the Third Dynasty. The tomb, which is the oldest existing building of stone masonry in the world, was a terraced structure, with each successive layer

smaller than the previous one. Today it is known as the Step Pyramid.

Of the six dynasties of the Old Kingdom, the fourth was the most powerful and prosperous, and consequently its pyramids were the most impressive. The largest of them, the tomb of Pharaoh Khufu, also known as Cheops, required the labor of 100,000 men for twenty years. The building of these great tomb fortresses, designed to protect the dead pharaoh's body so that, as the representative of his race, he might become immortal, required a knowledge of geometry, knowledge of the principle of the inclined plane, and the use of bronze saws to cut the great stone blocks.

### *Egypt's Middle Kingdom and Empire*

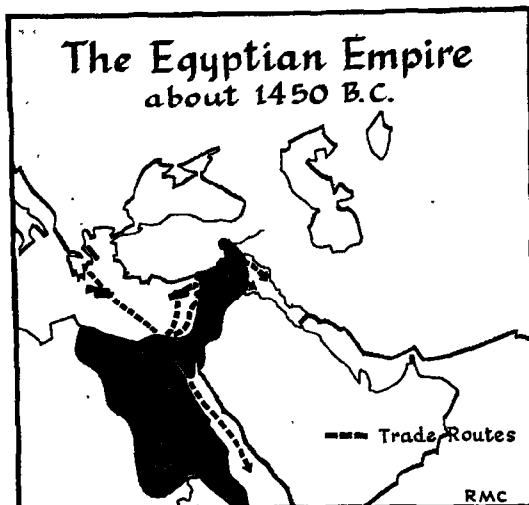
**The Feudal Age.** During the rule of the Sixth Dynasty of pharaohs of the Old Kingdom, strong centralized government was undermined by the rise of independent and ambitious provincial governors. Upon the death of Pepi II, who had reportedly ruled for ninety-four years, civil war broke out and the power of the pharaohs collapsed. For three hundred years petty governors struggled among themselves for power, while the lot of the common people became almost unbearable because of famine, oppression by petty tyrants, and destruction caused by fighting. The period which saw the destruction of the Old Kingdom is known as the Feudal Age (2475-2160 B.C.) and marks the transition from the Old Kingdom to Egypt's second great epoch of civilization, the Middle Kingdom. Progress in civilization practically ceased.

It may be helpful to remember that the period of confusion is called feudal largely because there was an absence of centralized authority. In world history there are many instances of feudal ages, all characterized, more or less, by the existence of powerful local lords, usually possessing extensive tracts of land on which lived large numbers of fighting men ready to do the lord's bidding. In such a system it was every man for himself; might made right. Traces of feudalism still linger today. In England there is still an important landed aristocracy whose lands and titles go back to the English feudal age of more than five hundred years ago. Japan emerged from a feudal age only about eighty years ago. We

shall see later in this book that the most famous feudal age of all time existed in Europe during the Middle Ages and reached its height in the twelfth century.

**The Middle Kingdom.** After three hundred years of disunity, the princes of Thebes, a city on the upper Nile, succeeded in reestablishing national unity under one pharaoh. They were the rulers of the famous Twelfth Dynasty, the most important of whom were Sesostri III and Amenemhet III. Under the capable guidance of the new line of pharaohs, strong monarchy, law and order, and economic prosperity were restored, and progress in civilization was resumed. The Twelfth Dynasty ruled for about two centuries. The period of its rule with that of its predecessor, the Eleventh Dynasty, constitutes what is known as the Middle Kingdom in Egyptian history (2160-1780 B.C.). If the Old Kingdom is famous for its pyramids, the Middle Kingdom is especially noted for its literature. In fact it excelled in all the arts, and with the probable exception of architecture, its artistic accomplishments were never surpassed in any other period of Egyptian history.

**The Hyksos invasion.** The history of the Old Kingdom, however, was recapitulated in that of its successor, the Middle Kingdom, for a period of progress and prosperity was succeeded by political decentralization and civil war. Following the demise of the Twelfth Dynasty, the Nile valley was fragmented into petty states, all warring on each other. Internal disunity was the occasion for foreign inva-



sion. About 1780 B.C. an Asiatic people whom the Egyptians called Hyksos, possessing a superior army equipped with horses and chariots, swept down on Egypt, thoroughly conquered the region of the delta, and gradually extended their power over most of Upper Egypt. For two centuries, until 1580 B.C., these aliens lorded it over the Egyptians, treating them with terrible cruelty and taking much wealth from the Nile valley. Under such circumstances the Egyptians, who heretofore had been a peace-loving people, became imbued with strong nationalistic feeling and hatred of their oppressors. On all sides nationalistic rebellion broke out against the hated Hyksos, who had settled down and adopted Egyptian customs, even to the title of pharaoh.

**The Empire period.** The struggle against the foreign Hyksos was bitter, but finally a complete victory was achieved at Thebes by the princes of the south, who drove out the alien dynasty. Aahmes of Thebes was the liberator and great national hero who gained independence for his people. His reign (1580-1557 B.C.) marks the beginning of the third and last magnificent period in ancient Egyptian history, that of the Empire. The rulers of Egypt believed that to make their country secure from foreign invasion it was essential for them to control Palestine, Syria, and Phoenicia. In addition it was imperative for the pharaohs to maintain a fleet which could control the waters of the eastern Mediterranean. In order to protect themselves, the Egyptians therefore embarked on a policy of imperial-

ism, its object being to control the routes utilized by the invaders.

The new dynasty, the Eighteenth, founded by Aahmes, successfully carried out the policy of conquering strategic areas adjacent to Egypt. The greatest pharaoh of the period was Thutmose III (1479-1417 B.C.) who is often called the Napoleon of Egypt. As a result of numerous campaigns, Thutmose conquered Syria, Phoenicia, and Palestine, and even far-off Babylonia sent him gifts out of respect for his power. The relationships between Egypt and these areas become clear later in the chapter. There is good reason to believe that Thutmose also brought Nubia under his sway and compelled Cyprus and the cities of Crete to become his allies.

During Egypt's greatest glory under the pharaohs of the Eighteenth Dynasty, her civilization and political power reached their zenith. Law and order again prevailed along the valley of the Nile, trade flourished, and vast wealth in the form of tribute or booty flowed into Egypt as a result of military conquest. Thebes, the imperial capital of the pharaohs, became the most magnificent and richest city in the world. Great temples, beautiful gardens, and imposing mansions for the nobility made Thebes the most beautiful capital of its day.

Under Amenhotep III (1411-1375 B.C.) the empire reached its height. However, in his reign signs of decline were apparent. Religious controversy and pressure from without on the part of aggressive enemies resulted in the loss of most of the territories outside of Egypt. To the period of decline, in the last days of the Eighteenth Dynasty, belongs the weak emperor Tutankhamen, who has received an undeserved immortality and fame resulting from the discovery in 1922 of his remarkable tomb.

Ramses II (1198-1167 B.C.) of the Nineteenth Dynasty, pharaoh of Hebrew oppression, tried to restore the glory of the empire and had partial success. Egyptian power was reestablished in southern Syria and Palestine, great monuments were erected along the Nile, and the empire superficially seemed prosperous and secure. It was Egypt's last demonstration of national greatness. The land of the pharaohs ceased to be a power in international affairs and became the puppet of a long line of conquerors from Cambyses, the Persian emperor

in the sixth century B.C., to Lord Cromer, the British ruler of Egypt in the late nineteenth century.

All over the Near East new peoples were rising to power (see page 55 ff.). The Hittite empire to the northeast was pressing hard, a coalition of Indo-European peoples from the north and west was invading Asia Minor, the Arameans were building up their domination of the trade routes in the Near East, the Hebrews were establishing themselves in Palestine, the Philistines had also created a powerful state in southern Palestine, and the Dorian Greeks had overwhelmed Aegean civilization in the Greek peninsula and in the islands of the Aegean Sea. This new alignment of unfriendly peoples spelled the end of Egyptian influence outside her own borders, especially in Syria. The great emperor Ramses III (1198-1167) for a time staved off the collapse of the empire which had been created by the pharaohs of the Eighteenth Dynasty, but after his death the empire never regained its former brilliance.

**Foreign domination.** From 1100 to 671 B.C. Egypt was ruled by alien African kings who tried to re-create Egypt's past glories. Their feeble rule was displaced by the jarring shock of Assyrian invasion and overlordship from 670 to 662 B.C. During the Assyrian occupation much of Egyptian wealth was confiscated by the invaders. After the fall of the Assyrian empire, national Egyptian independence was restored for a time, but in 525 B.C. Cambyses, the Persian emperor, again conquered the valley of the Nile. After a cycle of national life which had been initiated with the union of Upper and Lower Egypt in 3400 B.C. and which had endured for almost three thousand years, Egyptian political independence disappeared until the twentieth century. But although Egypt had lost her political independence and her relative importance declined, it would be unwise to speak of her "fall." Egypt on several later occasions reached an impressive level of civilization in the hands of her conquerors, who shaped her people and institutions to suit their needs. We shall see that the famous world-conqueror Alexander the Great brought Egypt into contact with Greek thought and that his successors, the Ptolemies, made the city of Alexandria in Egypt the most outstanding center of scientific speculation in the world. Following the col-

lapse of Greece and Rome, Egypt came under the rule of the Moslems, who created a flourishing Mohammedan civilization, centered at Cairo.

Life in Egypt, for the common man at least, went on in much the same fashion after the collapse of the pharaohs. The old distinctive Egyptian culture, especially the religion, persisted until the coming of the Romans. With the Roman legions eventually came a new religion, Christianity, which took root along the Nile and flourished until the seventh century A.D., when the Moslems overran the country. The Egyptian language had earlier given way to the Greek, and with the coming of the Moslems, Arabic became the official language. Following the Mohammedan conquest, the Egyptian began to think of himself as an Arab. He forgot most of his ancient traditions, accepted the Mohammedan religion, and participated in the art and literature of the Moslem east. Only among the lowly peasants did there lurk vestigial remnants of the glorious past. The village peasant, the fellah, retained many of the old ways and ancient traditions in his folklore, in quaint village customs, and in the veneration of the local deities. It is said that in the nineteenth century, when the first mummies of the long-buried pharaohs were transported down the Nile, the village women lined the river's banks and reverted to the ancient custom of wailing for their dead god and king.

**Evolution of the territorial state.** Ancient Egypt (as well as other contemporary civilizations in Mesopotamia, as we shall see) made one significant stride in government. This was the evolution from a primitive social system, consisting of miniature and multitudinous rival kinship groups, to a great state, encompassing all people in a given area regardless of kinship ties and exacting from all obedience and loyalty to one central government and its ruler. In short, many clans were merged to constitute one nation. Egyptian villages, consisting of related families, were gradually united into territorial units called nomes, and finally these became united into one single kingdom. The development of the territorial state was the major contribution of Egypt and the other oriental countries to the political evolution of civilized man.

**Egyptian government.** The governmental system of the territorial state, as it finally evolved in Egypt during the Old Kingdom



was an extreme absolutism. All power resided in the ruler, who was called Pharaoh, meaning Great House. The powers exercised by modern totalitarian rulers look almost meager when compared with those of the ancient Egyptian despot. The pharaohs owned all the land; they decided when the crops should be sown, controlled the irrigation system, and exacted a share of the crops produced by the semi-servile laborers who toiled on the huge royal estates. With none to question his powers, which the Egyptians believed were sanctified by the gods, in regal splendor, surrounded by elaborate court etiquette, the pharaoh dictated every aspect of the life of his subjects. Egyptian government was theocratic, that is, the pharaoh combined both religious and political functions. He was both an earthly king and a god, the chief priest of the land and the spiritual symbol of the nation in all its important religious rites.

It is interesting to note that the ancient Egyptians had succeeded as early as the time of the Old Kingdom in creating a complex and efficient administrative system which alone made possible the centralized absolutism of the pharaoh. Directly responsible for the management of the state were three officials: a chief treasurer and two prime ministers called viziers. These officials presided over an army of subordinates made up of overseers, scribes, and policemen. The subordinates had no power of initiative and no choice but to

carry out unquestioningly the orders which emanated from the palace of the pharaoh.

By this time there evidently existed a law code. Scholars believe that it filled forty rolls of papyrus, but unfortunately no copies are now in existence. We have every reason to believe, however, that the people looked to their government for justice, as ancient papyri tell us that the vizier was a judge "judging justly, not showing partiality," and "not preferring the great above the humble."<sup>2</sup>

Under the government of the pharaoh the people were at the mercy of their ruler. There was nothing approaching self-government; that was to be the great achievement of the Greeks. The Egyptian government, however, was paternal. Most pharaohs evidently endeavored to protect their subjects and advance their prosperity. An interesting papyrus roll from the time of the empire gives us the words of a pharaoh installing his vizier:

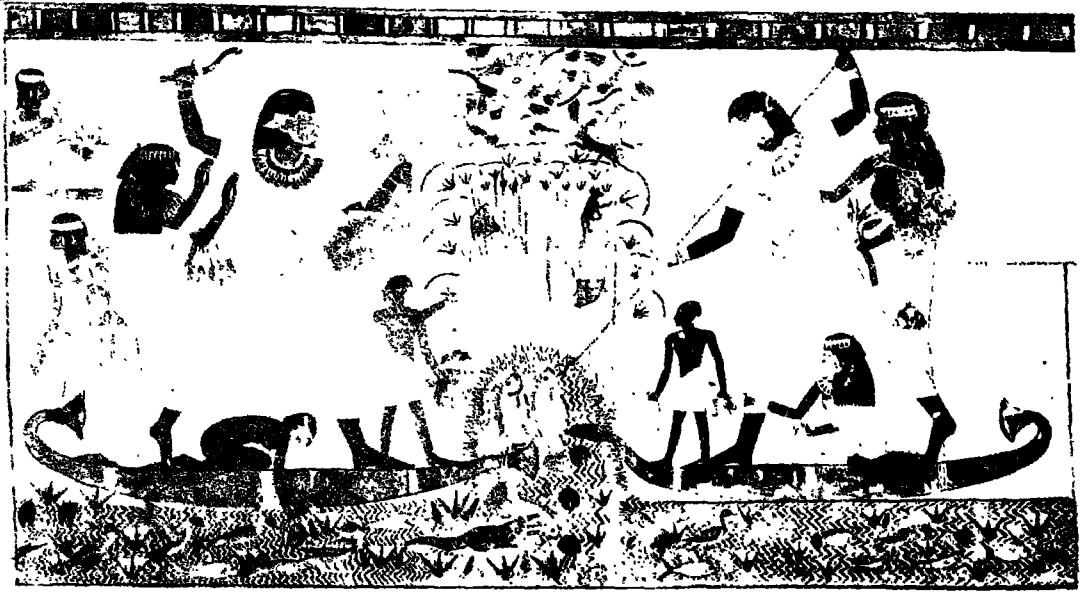
"Look to the office of the Vizier; be watchful over all that is done therein. Behold, it is the established support of the whole land. . . . The Vizierate is not sweet; it is bitter. . . . Behold it is not to show respect-of-persons to princes and councillors; it is not to make for himself slaves of any people. . . . Behold when a petitioner comes from Upper or Lower Egypt . . . see thou to it that everything is done in accordance with law, that everything is done according to the custom thereof, [giving] to [every man] his right."<sup>3</sup>

### *Life and Work in Ancient Egypt*

**H**ome and social life. In the days of the Empire, Egypt proper, not including the subject peoples in Syria, had a population of about seven million. The great bulk of the people were semi-slaves who lived in squalid villages made up of little mud and thatch houses in which the only furniture was a few crude jars, boxes, and a stool. These people lived in constant dread of the royal tax collector. They were subject to forced labor—work on the roads or tilling the royal fields, or worse, hauling huge stones for the pyramids. The merchants and skilled craftsmen of the middle class had more comfortable and pretentious dwellings, and those of the nobility were palatial. Here furniture and draperies were luxurious, while extensive and beautiful gardens surrounded the house.

"This was the noble's paradise; here he spent his leisure hours with his family and friends, playing at draughts [checkers], listening to the music of harp, pipe and lute, watching his women in the slow and stately dance of the time, while his children sported about among the trees, splashed in the pool, or played with ball, doll or jumping-jack."<sup>4</sup>

During the passing of more than two thousand years since the Pre-Dynastic period of primitive Egypt, substantial changes had taken place in the social grouping of the people. Among primitive people all individuals are, in general, members of the same social and economic class. There may be a small ruling clique, and at the bottom captured enemies may form a slave class, but the great bulk of people perform the same economic tasks, live



*Duck hunting for this Egyptian is a matter of decoying the ducks from his papyrus boat and hitting them with his boomerang, while his wife and daughters gather lotus blossoms. To the right of the papyrus hedge the same man spears fish, steadied by his wife and daughter. The grown-ups wear thin, cool clothes, while the youngest wears none at all.*

in similar houses, and possess about the same worldly goods. But with civilization come gradations in society. Some men remain laborers, others become skilled artisans, and others become wealthy merchant princes. In Egypt, as elsewhere, the growth of population, the tendency toward specialized vocations, and the increase of wealth soon resulted in the creation of distinct classes in society. Three main social divisions can be distinguished: (1) the court nobility, royalty, priests, and the landed aristocracy, (2) the middle class, composed of merchants and craftsmen, (3) the bulk of the population, who were servile laborers. Although such grouping existed in Egyptian society, it was not rigid. People of merit could elevate themselves into higher social ranks.

The clothing of the Egyptians was always sparse, as one would expect in a warm climate. At first a loin cloth sufficed, even for the upper classes, while the poorest often went naked. With the growth of wealth, however, which came during the Empire, clothes became more luxurious and less scanty. Both sexes liked to adorn themselves with rings, chains, and earrings, and the women used cosmetics.

Most men were content with one wife, though the richest nobles enjoyed the luxury

of a harem. Family life, on the whole, seems to have been wholesome. Infanticide—outright killing of unwanted children—was not practiced. Divorce was infrequent, and only when adultery was proved could a husband avoid giving his wife a share of his property.

The status of the Egyptian woman was exceptionally favorable. She was in every respect the equal of man. In fact many aspects of society were dominated by women. Sons in-



*An Egyptian princess is having her hair set in tight curls. In one hand she holds a mirror, in the other a beverage. A servant is fixing her another.*

herited property through their mothers, and once a woman actually ruled as queen of the land. Even in courtship women often took the initiative. Many love poems coming down to us were written by women. The following is a good example of one of these love poems:

I am thy first sister,  
And thou art to me as the garden  
Which I have planted with flowers  
And all sweet-smelling herbs.  
I directed a canal into it,  
That thou mightest dip thy hand into it  
When the north wind blows cool

It is intoxicating to me to hear thy voice,  
And my life depends upon hearing thee.  
Whenever I see thee

It is better to me than food or drink.<sup>5</sup>

**Economic life.** Throughout Egyptian history agriculture has remained the basic economic activity. The centralized system of irrigation made possible enormous crops of wheat and barley; extensive vineyards, vegetable gardens, and herds of cattle were also maintained. Every year in July the Nile overflowed, and by November the soil was dry enough to permit cultivation. The ground was first broken with crude plows, and then cattle were used to tramp in the seed.

Industry began in the early days of the Old Kingdom and developed rapidly. Extensive copper mining was carried on in the Sinai peninsula, stone quarrying became highly organized to meet the demands of pyramid building, and huge quantities of sun-dried bricks were made. Cabinetmakers fashioned handsome furniture out of the famous cedars of Lebanon. Tanning became a specialized craft, the process of fusing copper and tin to make bronze became known, glass blowing and enameling were developed by skilled artisans, and weavers were highly proficient. Egyptian craftsmen exhibited a degree of technical efficiency that was seldom surpassed in western Europe until the Industrial Revolution. During the period of the Empire the products of the craftsmen were exceptionally fine. Beautifully glazed jars, delicate stone dishes, and exquisite brooches attest his skill.

During the Old Kingdom much commerce plied up and down the Nile, expeditions were sent southwest to the interior for ebony and ivory, and the pharaohs sent ships down the Red Sea. The Egyptians can claim to have

developed the first sea-going ships for use on the Mediterranean. As early as 2750 B.C. Egyptian ships were sailing the eastern Mediterranean bound for Phoenicia, and by 2000 B.C. extensive trade relations existed with Crete. Egyptian commerce never developed so extensively as that of Syria and Mesopotamia; it was not until the invasion of the Hyksos that it became very important. Apparently the Hyksos were great traders, and their contact with the Egyptians was a strong stimulus to commerce. Trade reached its height during the Empire, when Egypt controlled the trade routes of the Near East.

Empire commerce was conducted along four main routes (see map, page 36): (1) To expedite merchant voyages, a canal was constructed which connected the Red Sea with the eastern part of the delta (shown on the map on page 33); (2) along the Nile numerous ships brought goods from the south; (3) a busy caravan route maintained contact with Mesopotamia and southern Syria; and (4) shipping from northern Syria, the mainland of Greece, Crete, and other islands came to a focus at the delta of the Nile. The main exports were wheat, linens, scarabs (charms), and gold wares. The most important Egyptian imports were ostrich feathers, metal weapons, spices, tapestries, woods, gold, and silver.

Commercial activity spread characteristics of Egyptian culture throughout the known world. The products of Egyptian craftsmen, for example, were used by the Cretan seakings, and glazed pottery and jewelry from the Nile valley have been found on the mainland of Greece. Elements of Egyptian religion and certain basic art forms became known to the Aegean peoples through commercial contact and were later adopted by the Greeks. Egypt, of course, was in turn influenced by contact with the civilizations of western Asia.

**Religion in Egypt.** Egyptians were called by the Greeks the most religious of all men. And so they were, for religion saturated their viewpoint and influenced every aspect of society.

"The kings of Egypt were gods; its pyramids were an 'act of faith'; its art was rooted in religious symbolism; its literature began as religious decoration of tombs, temples, and pyramids; its science centered in the temple; its gods were conceived to be in intimate touch with men and alive as men; a vast part of its

wealth and energy was spent in the effort to secure the continuance of the physical life after death."<sup>6</sup>

The great obsession of all people was to achieve immortality for their souls. In the days of the Old Kingdom, the lower classes felt aggrieved because they could not have their bodies mummified after death, as the pharaoh and the rich nobles did, nor could they obtain full funeral rites. These were serious handicaps in securing immortality. So strong was the desire for the afterlife that the common people agitated not for political but for religious equality. This was obtained in the Middle Kingdom, and henceforth all people could claim full funeral rites.

**Osiris.** Their all-pervading emphasis upon immortality was largely due to the influence of the god Osiris. He was the god of the Nile, and the rise and fall of the river symbolized his death and resurrection, which were celebrated each year. Then an interesting myth developed. It was recounted that Osiris was murdered by Seth, his evil brother, who cut the victim's body into many pieces and scattered them over the land. Isis, the bereaved widow, collected all the remnants of the corpse. These were then put together, Osiris was resurrected, and became immortal. Finally Horus, the son of Osiris, avenged his father against Seth.

The Egyptians saw in the myth a way to escape death. Osiris was the first mummy. Only by the recovery of the many parts of his body had he achieved immortality. Every dead Egyptian, therefore, was regarded as a

second Osiris. The way to give him immortality was to preserve the corpse. This was achieved by mummifying and placing the body in a tomb which would give it the maximum of protection. As befitted the first man of the land, a pharaoh was given a massive tomb-fortress, a pyramid, to protect and preserve his body until judgment day.

If the soul came to Osiris cleansed of sin, it would be permitted to live forever in the Happy Field of Food. At the time of soul-testing, Osiris weighed the candidate's heart against the feather of truth. If the ordeal was not passed, a horrible creature devoured the rejected heart. The priesthood, which exercised a very strong influence in the Egyptian state, often to the detriment of the state, claimed that it alone knew clever methods of surviving the soul-testing. For a consideration, charms and rolls of papyrus containing magical prayers and formulas were sold to the living as insurance policies guaranteeing them a happy immortality after death. That it was a lucrative business is seen by the fact that some 2000 papyrus rolls containing such magical formulas have been taken from ancient tombs. They constitute collectively what is known as the *Book of the Dead*. Pictured below is a scene from one of these rolls.

**Characteristics of Egyptian religion.** Egyptian religion for many hundreds of years had no strong ethical character. Immortality was not regarded as a reward for goodness while a person was alive. That idea, however, developed gradually until eternal life was re-



*Osiris sits in judgment as his dog-headed creature weighs the heart of a princess against a feather. Isis stands behind the princess. The scene was inscribed on papyrus and buried with the mummy of the princess.*

garded as a reward merited only by those who were just and good while alive. On the whole, while Egyptians never made any impressive advance in closely relating daily conduct and religion, yet it seems clear that they developed a conception of immortality and moral responsibility long before the peoples of other early civilizations. The myth of Osiris and Seth was an anticipation of the dualistic conception of a god of good and a god of evil which was later given such a strong emphasis by the Persians and others.

Religion was of paramount concern to the Egyptian people, and it was also extremely complex in character. It concerned the worship of many gods, such as Ra, the sun deity, Osiris, the god of water, Isis, the Great Mother, and many animal-headed gods. At

first Ra was the most important, but with the rise of Thebes in political importance a place had to be found for its deity, Amun. The supreme god, therefore, became Amun-Ra. A famous pharaoh and reformer in the time of the Empire, Amenhotep IV, who adopted the name of Ikhnaton, tried unsuccessfully to supplant Amun-Ra and the confusing multiplicity of minor gods by substituting a religion based on one deity, a sun god called Aton. Amenhotep developed an advanced conception of one all-prevailing and kindly god (monotheism). This was given beautiful expression in his famous *Hymn to the Sun* (see page 43). Amenhotep's efforts tragically failed, and in arousing religious factionalism among his subjects, he only weakened the Empire. Ancient Egypt retained its polytheism to the end.

### *Literature, Science, and Learning*

**Evolution of writing.** One of the most important Egyptian contributions to civilization was the development of the art of writing, especially the introduction of an alphabet. The first step in writing was the use of picture-like signs to represent ideas. The next advance was to use the same signs to represent the sounds of the words expressing those ideas. Once the signs were identified with sounds, some were conventionalized to represent the sounds of syllables, the stage called syllabic writing. With syllabic signs an indefinite number of words could now be written phonetically—with symbols representing their sounds.

About 3000 B.C. the Egyptians had reached the point of using special characters for certain vowels and consonants. They were actually on the verge of attaining a real alphabet. But there were too many symbols (about twenty for *A*, about thirty for *H*, and so on). They also continued to use their syllabic signs and ideographs (symbols for ideas). Thus in several thousands of years they never succeeded in developing a purely alphabetic system of writing.

The ancient Egyptians had what we might call the first books. Libraries have been discovered dating from 2000 B.C., consisting of rolls of papyrus in earthen jars. Papyrus was the forerunner of paper. It was made by splitting the papyrus reed into strips and pasting these strips together to make long rolls of

durable writing surface, much more practical than the heavy clay tablets used, as we shall see shortly, in Mesopotamia. Ink was prepared by mixing vegetable gum with lamp black.

The invention of writing represents one of the great milestones of human progress. Now man could accumulate knowledge, record it, and pass it on to his descendants. Writing also made possible the preservation of literature.

**Literature.** We can hardly speak of a literature in the days of the Old Kingdom because none has survived. The oldest inscriptions we have are the pyramid texts, which have been called the oldest chapter of human thought extant. They were mainly religious and are found on the walls of tombs and pyramids of the Fifth and Sixth dynasties. Their purpose was to assist the deceased to obtain immortality, and they consisted of a jumble of magical incantations, myths, and religious hymns.

During the Middle Kingdom, especially in the period of the Twelfth Dynasty, literature became much richer, more varied, and more secular. Many folk tales and collections of proverbs were now set down in writing. The period of the Twelfth Dynasty is called the classical age of Egyptian literature. One popular story told of the romantic adventures of a noble who wandered all over Syria but at last made his way back to his native land. Another story recounted the perils of a shipwrecked sailor, a narrative which is a proto-

type of Sindbad the Sailor. Other narratives of importance were the *Tale of the Two Brothers*, which has striking resemblances to the Biblical story of Joseph and his brethren; the *Tale of the Eloquent Peasant*; and *A Dialogue between a Man Weary of Life and His Soul*. The last work, poetical in form, is philosophical in tone and demonstrates profound thought. It is one of the most important of the Egyptian poems which have been preserved. Most of the literature was expressed in poetical language, though much of it was in prose form.

The most beautiful surviving piece of Egyptian literature is Ikhnaton's *Hymn to the Sun*. A few lines will suffice to give some idea of its poetic beauty and its conception of one all-powerful and beneficent Creator and Heavenly Father.

Thy dawning is beautiful in the horizon of the sky,

O living Aton, beginning of life!

When thou risest in the eastern horizon,

Thou fillest every land with thy beauty.

Thou art beautiful, great, glittering, high above every land,

Thy rays, they encompass the lands, even all that thou hast made.

How manifold are thy works!

They are hidden from before us,

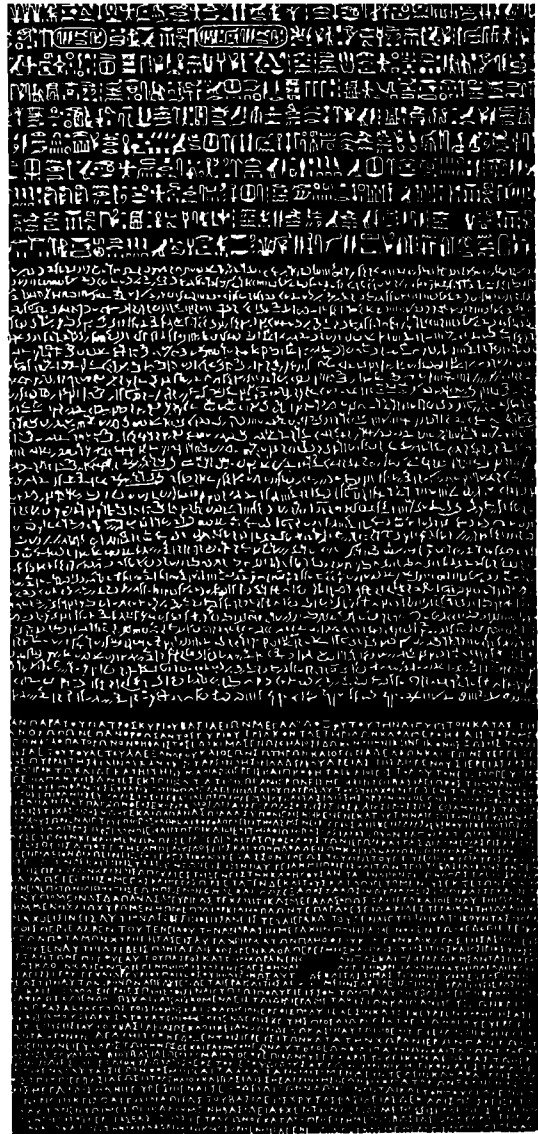
O sole god, whose powers no other possesseseth.

Thou didst create the earth according to thy heart

While thou wast alone.<sup>7</sup>

**The calendar.** We moderns accept our calendar as a commonplace detail of everyday life and do not realize that it is an indispensable tool of civilized existence. Like fire-making, knives, and pottery, the calendar had to be invented, a process taking several thousand years. In fact, the final step in the evolution of our present calendar took place as late as 1582 A.D. Neolithic man was the first to realize how essential a calendar was to fix the dates of his holy days and accurately ascertain the time for planting crops. He therefore devised a lunar calendar of twelve months, each twenty-nine and a half days in length, giving in all a year of 354 days. In order to harmonize his reckoning with the seasons, it was necessary from time to time to add a thirteenth month.

After the lunar calendar, the next major step was the development of a calendar based on the solar year. The Egyptians developed a



*The Rosetta Stone, discovered in Egypt in 1799 by an officer in Napoleon's army, supplied the means by which Jean Champollion was able in 1822 to decipher Egyptian writing, thus founding the study known as Egyptology and laying open a whole new field for research. The stone is now in the British Museum, and contains a message inscribed in three different languages, as is shown by the section reproduced here. The lowest layer of writing is Greek, which Champollion could read. Working from the Greek he was able to figure out the other inscriptions. The middle layer is Egyptian demotic, or popular writing. The top layer is the more formal system of hieroglyphic writing.*

system of twelve months, each of thirty days, totaling 360 days in all, and at the end of each year they added five days. This calendar year was just six hours short of the solar year, which forged ahead of the calendar one day in every four years. It was, however, imperative for their agriculture that the Egyptians know accurately when the Nile was about to inundate the land. Their need led to the discovery that when Sothis (our Sirius) rose with the sun, it signaled the rise of the Nile. The Egyptians clung to their not quite perfect solar year, letting it go its way but relying upon Sothis to guide their farming. Every 1460 years a Sothic Cycle was completed. During the Sothic Cycle there was often disparity between the time of the real seasons, represented by the rise of the Nile, and the official calendar. Every 1460 years, however, the cycle achieved perfect agreement with the calendar, the rise of the Nile, and the real solar year. The Egyptians realized that something was wrong but never corrected the difficulty. It was not until Julius Caesar added the Julian intercalary day every four years that

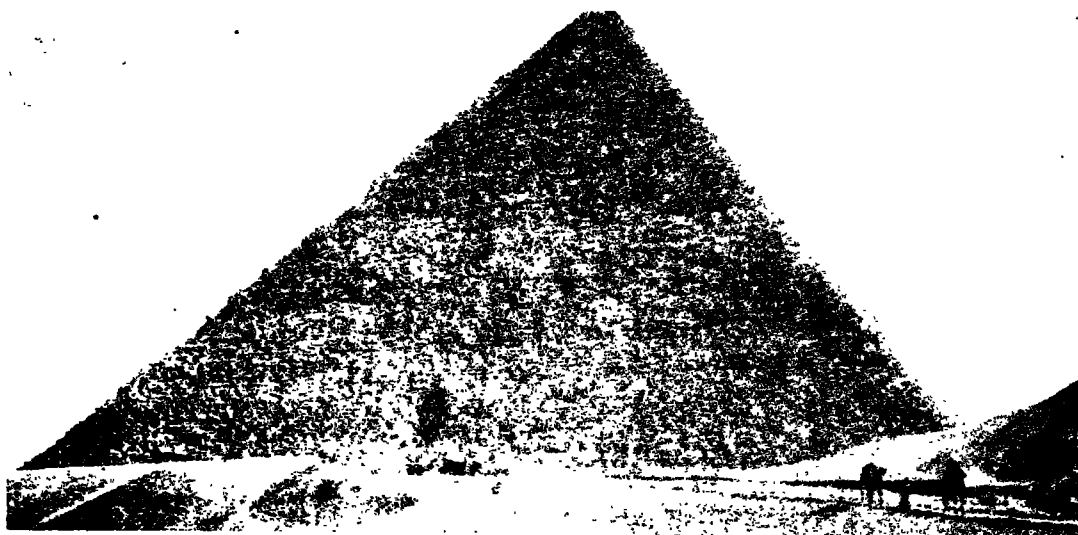
the next major improvement in the calendar was achieved.

**Science.** In their learning the Egyptians were a practical rather than a speculative people. Philosophy was not their forte; learning had to serve practical needs. That was why the Egyptians were the first people to develop a real science of mathematics. Precise measurements were needed to build the pyramids, and the constant obliteration of field boundaries by the inundations of the Nile necessitated frequent land measurement. To meet these needs the Egyptians learned to add and subtract. They also could multiply and divide by two and three. In surveying they utilized the rudiments of geometry, and they had some knowledge of algebraic equations. They developed a primitive decimal system, but it was never perfected; twenty-seven signs, for example, were needed to write the number 999. They computed the area of a circle by giving  $\pi$  the value of 3.16. Though the Egyptians laid the foundations for the science of mathematics, they made little progress in the fields of physics, astronomy, and chemistry.

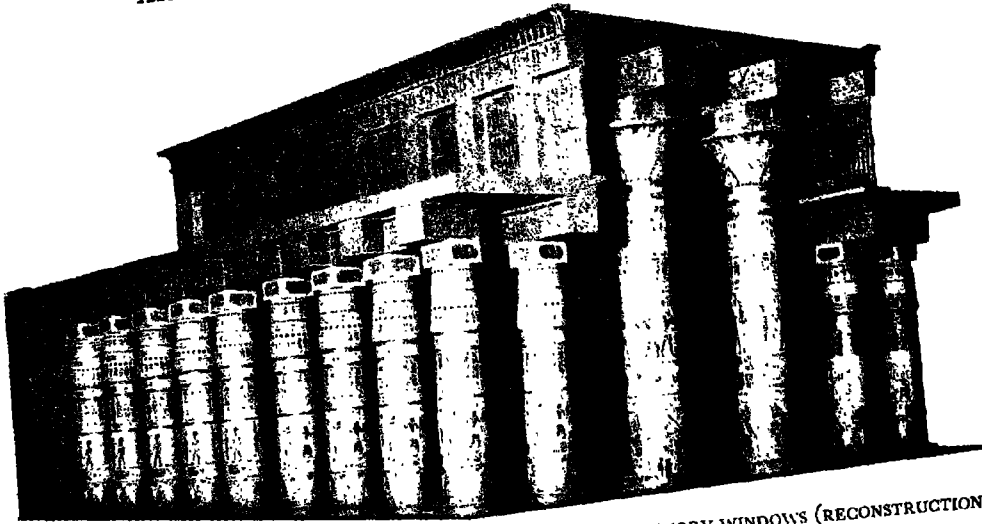
### *Art and Architecture in Ancient Egypt*

**Architecture.** Important as were the accomplishments of the Egyptians in government, religion, literature, and science, they cannot compare with their gains in art and

architecture, which were the most distinctive elements in Egyptian civilization. The Egyptians have been called the greatest builders in history. As far back as we know them they



ONE OF THE GREAT PYRAMIDS, TOMB-FORTRESSES OF THE EGYPTIAN PHARAOHS



THE HYPOSTYLE HALL OF THE TEMPLE OF KARNAK, SHOWING CLERESTORY WINDOWS (RECONSTRUCTION)

were advanced engineers, able to build in stone. The problems of shelter, light, and circulation (entrance and exit) had been solved. The structure of their society called for no houses above the merest mud huts for the common population, and evidently the palaces were not built well enough to last. The pre-occupation with life after death meant that the kings did not spend their energies building great palaces but concentrated on tombs to preserve their bodies eternally. Thus the two great types of architectural expression which have lasted and into which went the greatest effort were the tombs for the kings and the temples for the rich, priestly class. These temples also glorified the kings, who were themselves identified with religion.

As already noted, the pyramids were commanded by the pharaohs of the Old Kingdom. Today after four thousand years, many of these monuments still remain, scattered along the Nile south from the delta for a distance of fifty miles. At Gizeh the pyramid of Cheops, covering a base of thirteen acres, seems unbelievably huge. It was constructed of over two million limestone blocks, each averaging about two and a half tons, and is 481 feet high. It was built without mortar, and some of the stones were so perfectly fitted that a knife cannot be inserted in the joint. The pyramids are the best single expression of Egyptian civilization. In their quiet repose, dignity, and

massiveness, they reflect the religion-saturated character of Egyptian society.

If the Old Kingdom achieved immortality through its pyramids, the power and the glory of the days of the Empire still live in the ruins of the pharaohs' temples at Thebes. Booty and tribute from conquest made Thebes, with its great temples and palaces, a lavish capital city. Today little is left at Thebes except the temple ruins of Karnak. But that little is enough to attest to the magnitude of the Egyptian achievement in building.

The builders of the temple at Karnak, like the early lake dwellers, employed the structural system which was to be used almost exclusively until the Roman period—the post and lintel construction. This system enabled the builders to span openings for windows and doors and to roof over spaces. The size of the window or door and the width of the roofed space were limited, of course, by the size of the stone slabs. Post and lintel construction demands heavy stone work and partly explains the massive appearance of the buildings. Columns were used throughout the interiors of buildings in order to provide supports for roofing of larger areas. The temple of Karnak is an expression of the mystery of the Egyptian religion, just as the pyramids are an expression of the desire to hide the tombs for eternity. Many temple entrances were made mysterious and forbidding by heavy





STONE BLOCK STATUE OF PHARAOH KHAFRE

walls and small doorways, and the sanctuary was placed at the end of a series of courts and halls.

The temple of Karnak contains a huge colonnaded, or hypostyle, hall, the largest ever built. The tallest columns are seventy feet high. The two central rows of columns are taller than the others and have a separate roof, allowing wall space above the lower roofs of the two side aisles. This space was pierced with windows called clerestory windows. The higher middle aisle and the clerestory windows were later used in the Roman basilica and the Gothic cathedral.

**Sculpture.** Egyptian sculpture, like Egyptian architecture, was simple and formal. The Egyptians' tools and their ability to use them were far superior to the technical equipment of the Stone Age artists. In sculpture, as in architecture, their work shows an advance in technical skill. Sculpture was used as decoration for entrances to tombs and temples, and line carving and low relief were used as wall decoration. The latter types of sculpture are

almost two-dimensional in themselves and are therefore particularly adapted to a two-dimensional surface. Everyday subjects decorated the walls of the tombs, presumably to equip the dead with all that had surrounded them in life. The picture at the bottom of page 39 is an example of decorative line-carving illustrating an everyday scene.

In Egypt appears for the first time an advanced sculpture in the round. Statues which stand free from the wall on all sides naturally have to be designed in a three-dimensional manner, differing from reliefs, which are more nearly two-dimensional. The sculptors of the Old Kingdom had a great feeling for simplicity and conventionalized the bodies to conform to the blocks of stone. The seated figure of Khafre shows the shape of the stone from which it is carved. In these block statues the human figure is always shown, sitting or standing, looking squarely in front, which produces a certain rigidity. But when it is remembered that the statues were used in connection with a massive architectural setting, this rigidity is highly fitting.

Many statues were colossi, such as the Sphinx, which shows clearly that it was built up of blocks of stone. This immense statue conveys a remarkable impression of the dignity and power of the pharaoh. Many carved figures were religious symbols, strange combinations of men and birds and animals. The Sphinx has the body of a lion and the head of Pharaoh Khafre.

One of the most significant developments in the Empire period was the personalization of statuary. Sculptors were trying to get away from the abstract and symbolic, which had dominated their work in the Old Kingdom. In so doing they became excellent portraitists, but sculpture lost the fine architectural use of earlier days. The figure of Ramses II is a typical piece of Egyptian realism. Notice the greater individuality of the features as compared with the more abstract portrait of Khafre. Ramses is a person while Khafre is more a symbol of imperial power and dignity. Sculptors of Ikhnaton's time sometimes used limestone, which was a softer stone than the diorite of the Khafre statue or the quartzite of the Ramses head, and therefore allowed greater freedom for realistic treatment. Ikhnaton and his queen Nefretete are known to us through such true-to-life portraits.

**Painting.** Painting in Egypt was used to decorate the walls of tombs and palaces and in this use had to bow to certain restrictions in composition. The artist was confronted with a wall space to be decorated, and he immediately encountered certain external limitations. Examples of these are the size of the wall, the distance from which it was to be seen, and the incorporation into the design of architectural features such as doors and windows and columns. In Egyptian painting many figures are grouped in a conscious design. Although the Egyptians were interested in subject matter, it was often distorted if this distortion would make the pattern on the wall more decorative. As in sculpture, there were two types of subject matter. The religious, as seen in the illustration below, is symbolic and conventionalized. It shows the conventions used in all Egyptian painting. The most distinctive and decorative view in silhouette of each section of the body was chosen for depiction. Thus we see the profile of the face, the full view of the shoulders, the profile of the rest of the body, and the full view of the eye. There was no attempt to show objects receding in perspective, but sometimes it was shown that one object was behind another by overlapping objects in a series, or by putting one object above another. As painting was used as a mural decoration, these particular conventions of perspective



PORTRAIT OF PHARAOH RAMSES II



*A Theban wall painting shows the ceremonial farewell to the dead, as the bodies are about to be laid away. The painting (about 1385-1370 B.C.) decorated the tomb of two Egyptian sculptors.*



EGYPTIAN DANCING GIRLS (WALL PAINTING)

and flat treatment were very successful. The ruler or god was shown as larger than the other figures to emphasize his importance. These religious pictures with their many symbols may seem lifeless and uninteresting, since they are hard to understand without a complete knowledge of the meaning of the symbols. From a purely decorative point of view, however, they can certainly be enjoyed today. Certain colors were generally used in all these paintings—rich reds and yellows made from the earth pigments, and black and green-blue for contrast.

More appealing perhaps to our eyes are the

murals which depict everyday scenes. The painting of the dancers, although still following the conventions, is completely human and understandable, even in the twentieth century.

Throughout the ancient world, (Egypt, Crete, and Greece) different types of binding materials were mixed with paint. To ensure that pigment will stay attached to a surface it must be mixed with a material such as wax, gum, or egg. These mixtures produce surface paintings which do not withstand all weather conditions. Fresco, on the other hand, is permanent when properly done. The painting is executed on wet plaster, and a chemical reaction makes it part of the wall. But it is not definitely known that wet-plaster fresco was used before the time of Rome.

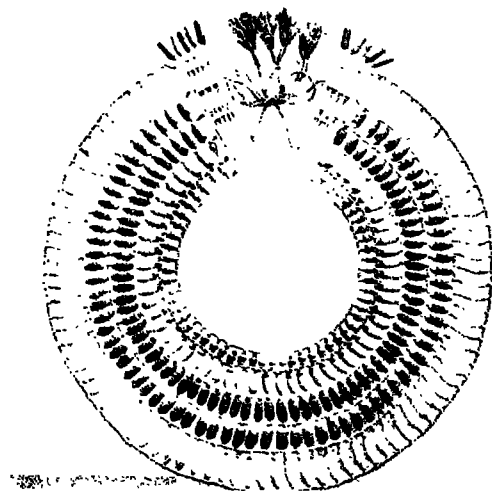
**Minor arts.** In the minor arts the Egyptians exhibited the same decorative sense. Jewelry was made of gold, semiprecious stones, and beads. The collar below is simple but very decorative. Egyptian gold jewelry reveals the wealth of priests and pharaohs. The Egyptians also made beautiful glass and pottery vessels.

### *The Land of the Fertile Crescent*

**Location of the Fertile Crescent.** During the three thousand years and more when the Egyptians were building pyramids, perfecting writing and the calendar, and developing commerce, equally important advances in civilization were being made in an area not far re-

moved from the land of the pharaohs, a belt of territory now called the Fertile Crescent. Bounding the great Arabian desert on the north, east, and west, this narrow band of fertile land starts at the Persian Gulf and extends to the north, skirting the desert through Babylonia and Mesopotamia, then turns west and bows south through Syria and Palestine along the Mediterranean to the desert of Sinai on the borders of Egypt (see map, page 33).

Mountains and high plateaus serve as boundaries of the Fertile Crescent on the north and east. In this elevated region lived restless Indo-European peoples who persistently pushed their way into the inviting narrow crescent of fertile land. Within the arc of the crescent were another people, desert nomads called Semites, mainly Arabs and Hebrews, who, driven by hunger and a desire for easier living, were continually fighting their way into the Fertile Crescent. Unlike Egypt, which was protected by the natural barriers of desert on the east and west, the Nile's cataracts to the south, and the sea to the north, and hence suffered few invasions and interruptions to the continuity of her civilization, the Fer-



AN EGYPTIAN COLLAR OF BEADS

tile Crescent was the scene of constant warfare. This took the form of continual struggle between the Indo-European hill folk and the Semitic desert people for control of the fertile land belt that edged the desert. Although at times promising civilizations were cut short by the shock of war, this was perhaps more than amply compensated for by the stimulating effects of the culture impacts of the movements and transplantations of peoples. Despite much warfare, therefore, the achievements in civilization made by the inhabitants of the Fertile Crescent do not suffer in comparison with those made along the Nile. The rise and fall

of numerous nations, however, make the history of the Fertile Crescent rather complex. In order to simplify the story, the development of civilization in the Fertile Crescent may be divided into the following periods:

Old Babylonia, the second cradle of western civilization (4000-1750 B.C.)

The Age of Transition and the Era of Small Nations (1750-700 B.C.)

The period of Assyrian dominance (700-600 B.C.)

New Babylonia, the empire of the Chaldeans (600-539 B.C.)

The Persian empire (539-333 B.C.)

### *Old Babylonia: The Second Cradle of Western Civilization*

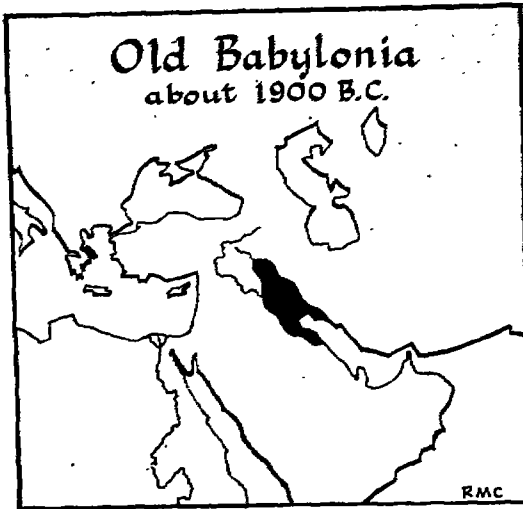
**T**he plain of Shinar. The first great civilization in the Fertile Crescent, like that of Egypt, was fluvial. It had its origin in a rich plain which extended about one hundred seventy miles north of the Persian Gulf between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers. These two rivers rise in the mountains of eastern Asia Minor and flow southeast in a roughly parallel direction. Just less than two hundred miles from the gulf, they emerge from the desert, approach each other very closely, and flow through a flat valley of alluvial soil that was brought down from the north and deposited by the rivers. This plain was early called Shinar, and later it came to be known as Babylonia. Although the term Mesopotamia was originally used to refer only to the land between the two rivers north of Shinar, today it includes all the territory between the rivers from Asia Minor to the Persian Gulf. Since 1918 the latter area, with its capital at Bagdad, has been known as Iraq.

It was no accident that civilization should appear early in the plain of Shinar. There the soil was very rich, the summers warm, and the winters mild. There was little rainfall, but, as in Egypt, there was an annual flood of the rivers. Dependence upon flood waters led, as along the Nile, to the development of irrigation, which in turn encouraged cooperation between the various groups of people living in the valley.

**Early Sumerian culture.** The people in western Asia who first inaugurated a civilization superior to the Neolithic stage were the Sumerians. Details of their racial origin are meager, but they probably migrated from hilly

country to the northeast into the plain of Shinar sometime before 4000 B.C. Overwhelming the Semitic inhabitants they found there, the Sumerians began to reclaim the marshes, build irrigation projects, and develop a settled community life. By 3500 B.C. they had achieved an advanced civilization with flourishing cities, well-organized city-state government, the use of metal, and the perfection of a system of writing called cuneiform. The latter, like the Egyptian system, started with a pictographic stage and by 4000 B.C. had evolved into a phonetic scheme of writing, in which each of 350 signs represented a complete word or a syllable. In writing, the Sumerians used a square-tipped reed to make impressions in soft clay tablets. The impressions took on a characteristic wedge shape; hence the term cuneiform (Latin *cunus*, wedge). Many other people, such as the Hittites, the Babylonians, and Persians, adapted this same system of writing to their own languages, and cuneiform continued in use until the Phoenician alphabet superseded it just before the time of the birth of Christ.

The southern portion of Shinar, which now became known as Sumer, saw the development of several independent Sumerian city-states, each of which was under a ruler who served as the war leader, the supervisor of the irrigation system, and the high priest. No strong centralized government was evolved by the Sumerians, and their history is mainly a chronicle of continual fighting between Ur and rival cities. The most prosperous period of the diminutive city-kingdoms was from 2900 to 2500 B.C. Ur was the earliest city to obtain the



leadership of Sumer, and its first ruler, Mesannipadda, is one of the earliest-known kings in western Asia. The inability of the Sumerians to unite proved their undoing, for in the twenty-sixth century B.C. Semitic people from Akkad, on the plain of Shinar, invaded Sumer and became masters of the entire plain.

**Advent of the Akkadians.** For two hundred years, from 2500 to 2300 B.C., the Semitic Akkadians ruled over an empire which extended from the Persian Gulf far up into Mesopotamia. Its founder was the great warrior Sargon, whose conquests made a profound impression on the peoples of the Near East. Although the Sumerian cities were subjugated, their culture was not destroyed. The hardy but primitive Semites led by Sargon readily adopted Sumerian writing, for they had none of their own, accepted the Sumerian calendar, and borrowed the business methods and city habits of their late adversaries. In short, there was a general mingling of peoples and cultures.

**Renewal of Sumerian supremacy.** The absence of the rigors of nomadic life on the desert and the new-found luxuries of sedentary life in the Sumerian cities weakened the descendants of Sargon and his fellow conquerors and ended the first Semitic empire after barely two centuries of existence. In its place again rose the old Sumerian cities. The city of Ur about 2300 B.C. successfully imposed its rule over the entire plain of Shinar, and its ruler called himself the King of Sumer and Akkad. Its supremacy, however, was short lived, end-

ing after a century. The rule of Ur was followed by even shorter periods of dominance by other Sumerian cities.

**Hammurabi's second Semitic empire.** Just before the end of the third millennium, two streams of invaders completely crushed the old Sumero-Akkadian power. The Semitic Amorites from Syria, under the leadership of their capable king Hammurabi (1948-1905 B.C.), finally brought all Sumer and Akkad under one rule. They even extended their sway to Assyria, a region in the northeast corner of the Fertile Crescent. Babylon, heretofore an obscure village on the Euphrates, was made their capital and became so important that the plain of Shinar was known from then on as Babylonia. After the founding of the second Semitic empire the Sumerians never again figured politically in history. Their civilization, however, persisted as the foundation for all subsequent civilizations in Syria and the Tigris-Euphrates valley.

**Sumerian cities.** The Sumerians were city dwellers and lived in small cities situated on artificial mounds around which were erected walls for defense purposes. Within were the dwellings of the inhabitants, constructed of sun-baked bricks. Houses were usually rectangular in shape, and each had a court on its north side. In the middle of every town, constituting the center of its activities and its most sacred and important edifice, was the temple.

**Economic and social life.** Agriculture was the basic economic activity. Outside the Sumerian towns extended well-tilled fields, whose fertile soil was skillfully watered by irrigation ditches. We have the word of Herodotus that "the whole land of Babylonia is, like Egypt, cut up by canals."<sup>8</sup> Barley, oats, and dates were produced in huge quantities, and domesticated cattle and goats made possible a flourishing dairy industry. The use of the plow was common, and here the first sowing machine was invented. Wheeled carts and chariots were in use. The Sumerians are given credit for introducing wheeled vehicles. The use of the wheel facilitated transportation enormously. Heretofore it had been necessary to carry things or drag them, which limited the size of the load. The Egyptians used the wheel but probably borrowed it from their Fertile Crescent neighbors.

Although industry lagged behind agriculture, there were numerous distinct crafts, with

skilled artisans and their apprentices turning out beautiful metalwork and exquisite textile goods. Raw materials for manufacturing were obtained from the north, made into finished products, and then exported to pay for imported wares. Active trade was carried on by the Sumerians over a wide area. Caravans journeyed north and west via the Fertile Crescent to the eastern Mediterranean and Egypt. Contact between Egypt and Sumer explains the similarity of several items of their culture. Both used the pear-shaped war mace and balanced animal figures in decorative art. Reliable evidence has recently been found indicating Sumerian trade connections with India. The Sumerians were, above all, a practical business people. Credits and loans were carefully regulated; a mass of contractual business records has survived.

Social organization followed the same general pattern as that in Egypt. There was a close connection between government and religion. Rulers were considered divine and absolute. Social gradations based on wealth were the rule, as in Egypt, but in Sumer the lines between classes were drawn more rigidly, and the principle of social inequality was enshrined in law.

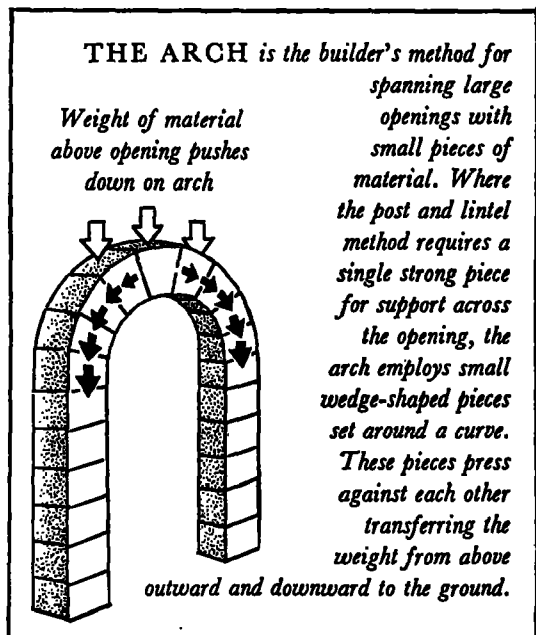
**Architecture and art.** The monuments and sculptures of Egypt have resisted the ravages of time surprisingly well, but not so in Sumer. An absence of stone there forced builders and architects to use sun-dried bricks. Before fierce sandstorms and destructive floods the Sumerian cities, common dwellings and temples alike, soon disintegrated into shapeless mounds of refuse.

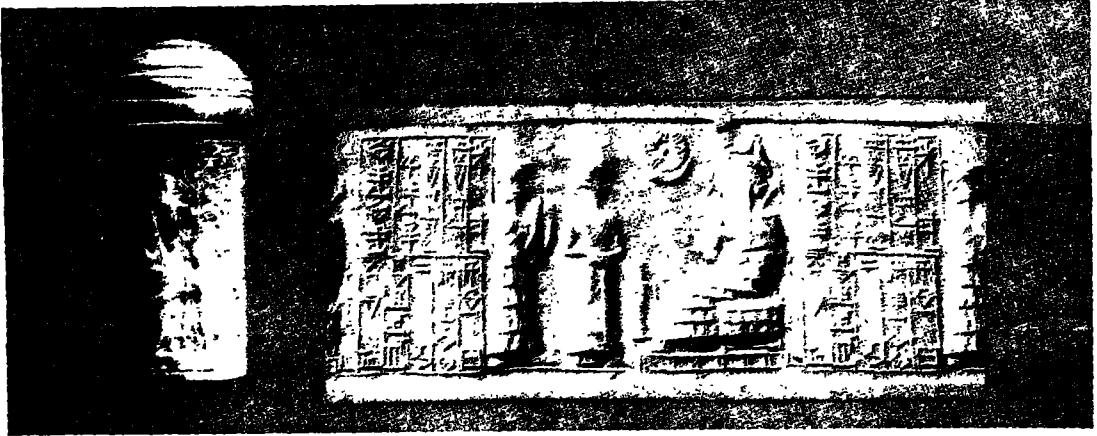
But the artistic and architectural achievements of Sumer have not been lost entirely. For a century archaeologists have been burrowing into many such mounds and have exposed the delineaments of temples and recovered priceless art objects. We know, for example, that one royal palace (3500 B.C.) was constructed on an elaborate plan, that it utilized great stairs, and that its walls were decorated with human and animal figures. We know that the Sumerians were familiar with the arch, vault, and dome. The lack of large stones meant that the post and lintel construction characteristically used in Egypt was impossible in Sumeria. Solid brick walls with roofs presumably of wood were the general rule. Although these builders experi-

mented with the arch and vault, such devices were not used on a large scale until the time of the Romans.

The most important buildings of the Sumerians were the temple towers, or ziggurats. Every town had such an edifice, dedicated to its patron deity. The typical ziggurat consisted of several stories, or levels, each stepped back and smaller than its predecessor. On one side was a great triple stairway, like a ramp, converging upon the entrance into the shrine of the god. Each story was given a different symbolic color. One might be black to represent the underworld, another red to indicate this world, and a third blue to symbolize the sky and the heavens. Profuse use was made of trees and gardens on the stepped-back terraces. Rising high above the flat valley floor, the vari-colored temples with their rows of terraced verdure shimmering under the brilliant sun must have presented a spectacle of great beauty.

The Egyptians, on the whole, surpassed the Sumerians in art. Scarcity of stone was a serious handicap to Sumerian sculpture. As a result, portrait sculpture never attained the excellence achieved by the Egyptians during the Old Kingdom. Generally speaking, Sumerian sculpture consisted of reliefs used for decorative and narrative purposes and small figures, or figurines. Strong, muscular people were typical subjects of Sumerian sculpture.





*A signature seal and its impression, showing a Sumerian ruler in audience with his local god. Seated on his throne, a dragon snake springing from each shoulder, the bearded god gestures impressively, while behind the ruler his protective goddess raises her hands to intercede. The sun and moon are symbols which guide the ruler's destiny.*

The figures were squat and heavy and their features were depicted simply. Figurines of animals were, however, more skillfully executed.

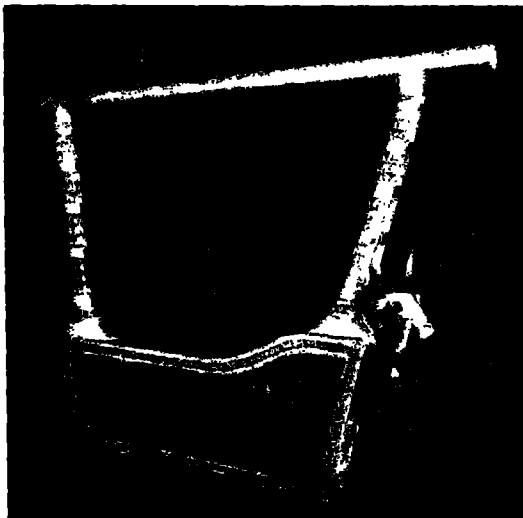
Heraldic devices originated with the Sumerians. Ultimately such symbolic devices became widely copied by rulers and governments for their insignias and coats of arms. Our American eagle, for example, is an adaptation of the Sumerian eagle of five thousand years ago.

Perhaps the most delicate artistic work of the Sumerians was their seal cutting and metalwork. Small seals of cylindrical stone were

carved in low relief in ornamental pictorial designs of great beauty involving infinite patience and expert technique. Every important citizen had his seal, which he constantly used to "sign" letters and documents written on clay tablets. The seal shown in the picture above belonged to a wealthy Sumerian, possibly a ruler of one of the cities. The interesting wedge-shaped relief patterns on the clay impression are cuneiform characters in reverse, having been impressed on the seal itself in the usual manner. Metal ornaments, vessels, and weapons found when the royal tombs at Ur were uncovered show a high degree of artistic ability. The harp with the golden bull's head shows Sumerian skill in handling the medium of gold. The mosaics decorating its base are patterned of shell and lapis lazuli, and the bull has a delicate beard of lapis lazuli.

**Religion.** Religion occupied almost as important a place in Sumerian life as it did in Egyptian. But there were significant differences. The Sumerians were little concerned with the future life. They had no conception of heaven or hell and placed little emphasis upon the ethical aspects of human behavior. Religion was for them primarily an instrument to guide and control man's activities on earth, a belief in keeping with the practical nature of the Sumerian people. Each Sumerian city had its favorite god.

**Literature.** The literature of the Sumerians, and that of the later Babylonians and Assyri-



HARP WITH GOLD BULL'S HEAD

ans, which was based upon it, was largely religious in origin and content. Two great epics are outstanding, one relating the story of creation and the other the story of the flood. Their legends are also notable: the stories of Etana, the shepherd who searched the heavens for the herb which was the source of life; of the fisherman Adapa, the first man, who like Adam lost the treasure of immortal life; and of Tammuz, who came back from the lower world.

Sumerian literature is more significant than that of Egypt, for it included the first great historical and mythological epics. The two Sumerian epics of the flood and the creation are similar to the later Hebrew stories of those events, as found in the Old Testament. The flood epic was adopted by the later Semitic Babylonians and incorporated in the longest and most beautiful of their epics, *Gilgamesh*. In it are recounted the adventures of Gilgamesh, a Sumerian Ulysses who sought to gain immortal life but failed and who heard the story of the flood from the Noah of Babylon, Ut-napishtim. The remarkable resemblances between the Babylonian epic and the later flood story as found in Genesis can be seen in the following lines from *Gilgamesh*.

What I had, I loaded thereon, the whole harvest of life

I caused to embark within the vessel; all my family and relations,

The beasts of the field, the cattle of the field, the craftsmen, I made them all embark.

I entered the vessel and closed the door. . . .

I sent forth a dove, I released it;

It went, the dove, it came back,

As there was no place it came back. . . .

I sent forth a crow, I released it;

It went, the crow, and beheld the subsidence of the waters;

It eats, it splashes about, it claws, it comes not back.<sup>9</sup>

**Other Sumerian contributions.** The Sumerians made numerous other contributions to civilization. They invented certain techniques of warfare. The military phalanx, in its elementary form, was probably their invention. In mathematics they made important progress. They originated a number system based upon the unit 60, which today is the basis for dividing a circle into 360 degrees

(60 x 6) and an hour into 60 minutes. They devised geometric formulas to compute the areas of triangles and irregular four-sided figures and also formulated the earliest known cubic equation. Additional gifts to civilization were the beginnings of city-state government and the foundations of business organization. Sumer also furnishes the earliest documents relating to international law, the most ancient international compacts, and the earliest known example of an attempt to settle a dispute by arbitration instead of going to war over it.

**Sumerian shortcomings.** Notwithstanding such important contributions, Sumerian civilization exhibited certain ills which were generally characteristic of all civilizations in the Ancient Near East. A large proportion of the population were slaves, government was despotic, and men suffered from the tyranny of a priesthood which forced complete acceptance of traditional ideas and gave little opportunity for intellectual freedom.

**Semitic culture.** In the land of Sumer and Akkad the Sumerians did not enjoy a monopoly of significant contributions. The rude Semitic tribes from the desert and from far-off Syria which invaded Shinar simply copied Sumerian culture at the outset, but soon they were making contributions of their own. Sargon's empire was progressive, but the second period of Semite dominance was especially rich in original contributions. We have already seen that Semitic people named Amorites established themselves in Sumer and Akkad about 2050 B.C., making Babylon their capital, and that Hammurabi, the sixth king of his line, subjugated the entire plain. So important did the new capital become that we usually lump together all the various peoples who figure in the history of the plain from the earliest time to about 1750 B.C.—Sumerians, Amorites, and all others—and refer to them as Babylonians and the period as Old Babylonia.

Hammurabi was one of the greatest rulers of the ancient world. We are fortunate to possess fifty-five of his letters, which give a vivid picture of the Babylon of his day and reveal how the king's eagle eye supervised every phase of governmental activity. In these ancient burnt clay tablets we can see Hammurabi sending orders to his subordinates in the local districts, checking delinquent taxes, and ordering the dredging of the Euphrates and the canals.





*Hammurabi receives his code from the sun god in the scene which heads the monument on which the code is carved.*

**Hammurabi's code.** Valuable as his letters are, Hammurabi's law code is infinitely more important. It is the oldest code in existence. It is written in cuneiform on a black diorite monument nearly eight feet high. The code of Hammurabi is notable for the harshness of its punishments, which invoke the *lex talionis* principle, "an eye for an eye." For example it stipulated: "If a man destroy the eye of another man, they shall destroy his eye." Implicit obedience of their father was demanded from children, for we read: "If a son strike his father, they shall cut off his fingers." Medical quacks and corrupt building contractors were punished also: "If a physician operate on a man for a severe wound with a bronze lancet and cause the man's death; or open an abscess

(in the eye) of a man . . . and destroy the man's eye, they shall cut off his fingers." And again: "If a builder build a house for a man and do not make its construction firm, and the house which he has built collapse and cause the death of the owner of the house, that builder shall be put to death." But while punishments were stern, on the whole; the code attempted to secure a crude form of justice. Punishments were graded in their severity so that the higher the culprit in the social scale, the more severe the penalty. The status of women was fairly high, but in the main the code was designed for a man's world. The following clause refers to an erring wife: "If she has not been economical, but a gadder-about, has neglected her house and belittled her husband, they shall throw that woman into the street."<sup>10</sup> The code shows that punishment for offenses was no longer in private hands by recourse to the blood feud between families but that justice had become a function of the state.

**Achievements under Hammurabi.** The age of Hammurabi, when compared to the Sumerian period, is not especially notable for advances in civilization. It is particularly lacking in art. During the first Semitic period, under Sargon, there had been some artistic advance, especially in sculpture. But during the age of Hammurabi seal cutting and sculpture declined.

The Semites of Old Babylonia made their mark in law and government. They also adapted the old Sumerian legends into such great epics as *Gilgamesh*. Of very great significance was the development of business procedures during the age of Hammurabi. During his time wills, promissory notes, and all kinds of witnessed and sealed documents were being used. Here was the invention of what we now call commercial paper. It was not until about 1500 A.D. with the rise of modern capitalism, that western Europe utilized a more advanced variety of contractual instruments in business.

### *The Age of Transition and the Era of Small Nations*

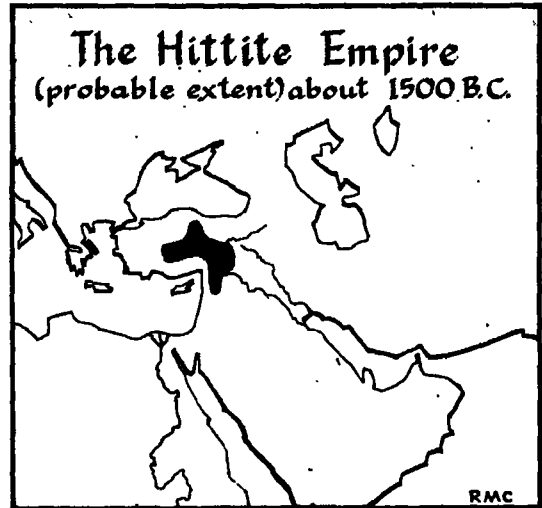
**Eclipse of civilization in Babylonia.** The empire of Hammurabi was of short duration. Soon after his death hostile mountaineers from the east invaded the plain of Shinar. By 1750 B.C. they had become its masters and remained so for six hundred years. The Old

Babylonian civilization described in the previous section, so brilliantly inaugurated by the Sumerians and carried forward by the Semites under Hammurabi and his house, went into an eclipse from which it did not emerge for more than a thousand years.

**The Hittite empire.** The center of emphasis now shifts to the lands of the Near East bordering the Mediterranean—to Asia Minor, Syria, and Palestine. During the Hyksos domination in Egypt (1788-1580 B.C.), a powerful new empire arose in the north central part of Asia Minor. The Hittites, who inhabited this area, rapidly extended their influence after 2000 B.C. and reached their height of power about 1500 B.C., when they controlled much of Asia Minor and Syria. The rapid expansion of the Hittites down the western band of the Fertile Crescent aroused the fear of the Egyptians, and a long and desperate struggle ensued between the two powers. This so weakened the antagonists that the Hittite empire fell apart about 1200 B.C., and Egyptian power collapsed in the following century.

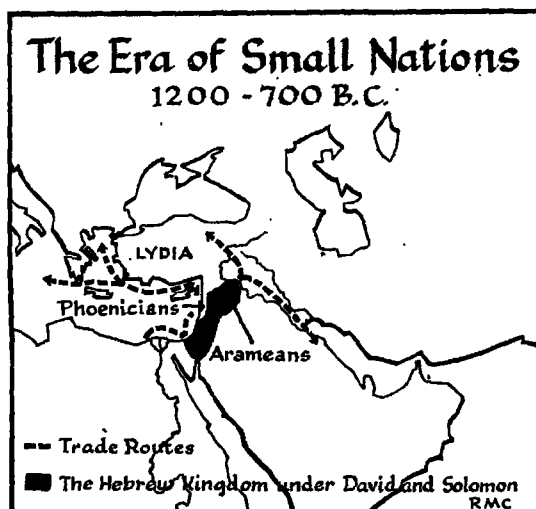
We may note in passing that during this period of turmoil and transition the Aegean world was also in confusion. As we shall see in our discussion of Greece, during the period from 2000 to 1400 B.C. a highly cultivated civilization had developed in the eastern Mediterranean with its center at Cnossus on the island of Crete. But shortly after the beginning of the second millennium, streams of northern invaders—Indo-European tribes whom we now call Greeks—invaded the Aegean world and by 1400 B.C. had destroyed Aegean culture. Another such Indo-European attack overwhelmed the Hittite empire.

What part did the Hittites play in the history of civilization? Until a few years ago they were a people of mystery, neglected by most historians. Recent discoveries, however, are demonstrating that such neglect was hardly justified. Imposing ruins of a once-great city have been uncovered in modern Turkey together with over 20,000 clay tablets. Hittite civilization was not equal to that in Babylonia or Egypt. The Hittite empire was a group of semi-independent clans acknowledging one king rather than a strongly organized and autocratic state. But it had considerable influence on contemporary civilizations. Its use of guardian lions and sculptured reliefs in architecture was copied by the Assyrians, and it influenced the diffusion of the art of writing. Babylonian clay tablets probably came to Crete through the Hittites. Most important is the fact that they were among the earliest people to work iron, and through them that metal was distributed throughout the Near East.



**An era of small nations.** Following the collapse of the Hittites about 1200 B.C., the peoples of the Fertile Crescent were without a master power. Egypt was weak, Babylonia was impotent, and Assyria was just beginning to be powerful. The Near East as yet did not need to fear the Greeks, since from about 1200 to 800 B.C. the newcomers in the Aegean world were experiencing the "middle ages" of their history, a period of little advance in civilization or power. For nearly five hundred years a number of small states flourished in the Fertile Crescent. Many individual cultures had an opportunity to develop, because no one state could impose uniformity.

As we have seen, Babylonia was subject to constant infiltration of Semitic peoples from the adjacent desert. Similarly, droves of nomadic Semites had pushed west into Syria-Palestine, the narrow band of land fronting the eastern Mediterranean. Most important of these peoples were the Phoenicians, the Arameans, and the Hebrews. The country in which they settled was a narrow avenue of land four hundred miles long and from eighty to a hundred miles wide. It was admirably located for trade. In north Syria were splendid harbors. But Syria-Palestine was not fitted to support the rise of a great power; its natural resources and its area were too limited. It has always been the prey of strong powers, and only the absence of such powers in the period from 1200 to 700 explains why small independent monarchies were permitted to develop there and make a brief bid for historical fame.



**The Lydians.** The most powerful state to arise in Asia Minor following the end of the Hittite empire was Lydia. Under their king Croesus the Lydians reached the height of their power in the early sixth century B.C. The wealth derived from valuable gold-bearing streams and prosperous commerce made Lydia the envy of its neighbors, and even today the phrase "rich as Croesus" is a reminder of Lydian opulence. As early as the ninth century B.C. Lydia originated coined money, a most important invention. Unlike the several small states in Syria, such as those of the Phoenicians, Hebrews, and Arameans, Lydia was able to maintain its independence against the Assyrians but finally fell a victim to the Persian army in the sixth century B.C.

**The Phoenicians.** Little is known of the early history of the Phoenicians. It is believed that this Semitic people entered the western band of the Fertile Crescent during the third millennium B.C. They founded a number of coastal settlements, the mountain ranges protecting them from attack on the land side. Their cities were all seaports, the most important being Tyre and Sidon. The Phoenicians were successively conquered by Sargon and Hammurabi, and about 1600 B.C. the Egyptian pharaoh brought them under his influence. For another four hundred years they remained under foreign rule until about 1200 B.C., when the decline of Crete, of the Hittite empire, and of Egyptian power gave them an opportunity to play an independent role. In a remarkably short period they became the great-

est traders, navigators, and colonizers before the Greeks (see map, page 117) and were rivals of the Greeks for many years. Their settlements could be found in the Mediterranean area, of which the greatest colony was Carthage. Passing through the Strait of Gibraltar, intrepid Phoenician sailors founded a settlement on the Atlantic coast of Spain and even ventured down the west coast of Africa.

The Phoenicians were skilled manufacturers. Their purple dye became famous, and their textiles, metal goods, and glassware had a wide market. They learned most of their industrial skill from Egypt. As the preëminent middlemen and great international traders of their age they acted as the intermediaries between the west and the east. These Phoenician traders brought to the Greeks a desire for the luxuries of the Near East, as well as some knowledge of oriental art.

There was little originality in Phoenician civilization, except perhaps for their skill in navigation and their business methods. The Phoenicians were not creative. They have left behind no literature, and their art is negligible. Yet as imitators they made their most important contribution, the perfection of the alphabet. The origin of the alphabet is still a moot question. Perhaps between 1800 and 1600 B.C. certain western Semitic peoples, influenced by the Egyptian semi-alphabetic writing, started to evolve a simplified method of writing. The Phoenicians, seeing the value of this, carried on the experiment and developed a system made up of individual consonants. Their alphabet consisted of twenty-two consonant signs (the vowel signs were later introduced by the Greeks). The Phoenicians arranged their signs in a definite order, their first two symbols being *aleph* and *beth*. Our word alphabet reminds us that the Phoenicians are primarily responsible for alphabetic writing.

The Phoenicians never became a politically united people. They were evidently not interested in conquest or fighting. Rather they influenced the advance of civilization through peace, colonization, and trade.

**The Arameans.** Another Semitic people, similar to the Phoenicians, were the Arameans. Entering the fertile region around Damascus during the latter half of the second millennium B.C., the Arameans established a group of prosperous little kingdoms, the most important of which was Damascus. Situated at

the head of the caravan route to Babylonia, the Arameans served the caravans just as the Phoenician harbors served Mediterranean shipping (see map, page 56). The Arameans have therefore been called the Phoenicians of inner Asia. For several hundred years the Aramean cities acted as a buffer against Assyrian expansion into Syria and Palestine, enabling the Hebrew kingdoms to enjoy national independence much longer than would otherwise have been possible. In 732 B.C., however, the Arameans fell before the might of Assyria, just as the Phoenicians had lost their independence to the same power a century earlier, in 854 B.C.

Political domination by the Assyrians, however, did not terminate the influence of the Arameans. Energetic Aramean merchants still took their trade caravans all over western Asia. They were excellent scribes and businessmen and often found employment in Babylonia, Assyria, and Persia. The Arameans, realizing the advantages of the Phoenician alphabet, used it in preference to the Babylonian cuneiform. Aramean merchants in their caravans carried bills and receipts in the simplified writing all over the Fertile Crescent. The alphabet was thus widely diffused and rapidly displaced the use of cuneiform. Its use then spread to Babylonia, Persia, Assyria, and even to India.

In the centuries just before the time of Christ, Aramaic became the general language of the entire Fertile Crescent. It even displaced Hebrew in Palestine. On this point M. I. Rostovtzeff says: "It is still a puzzle how they were able to drive out of general use the Babylonian language and cuneiform writing, which had been to some extent international in the second millennium, and to have their own speech and character accepted instead."<sup>11</sup> Whatever the reason, the Arameans serve as an early example of trade as a carrier of civilization, a frequent phenomenon in history.

**The Hebrews.** Accompanying the Arameans into the Fertile Crescent was another Semitic people who are called Hebrews, Israelites, or Jews. Racially these people were probably a mingling of several types. Their mixing with the Hittites may have given the Hebrews their characteristic aquiline nose, for it is not originally Semitic. In war, diplomacy, architecture, and art the Hebrews made little splash in the stream of history, but in the fields of ethics

and religion their contributions to world civilization were tremendous. It has been said that no other people in history so few in number and so weak in political power, except the Greeks, have so influenced civilization.

Tradition has it that the Hebrews originally made their home in the lower Euphrates valley and that Abraham was their patriarchal founder. Nomads for hundreds of years, they wandered in search of a homeland that offered a reasonable chance to develop a prosperous and contented society. From 1400 to 1200 B.C. they filtered into the land of Canaan, later to be called Palestine, a small region tucked between the desert and the sea. It was only 150 miles long, about the size of the state of Vermont. Another group of tribes had, according to tradition, been enslaved by the Egyptians. They were led out of bondage by the great national hero Moses, who gave his people the Ten Commandments and a new conception of God. Nearly all of Palestine was at that time in the hands of the Canaanites, a mixed Semitic and Hittite people. The conquest of these people by the Hebrews took a long time, for the various tribes were slow to unite against their common enemy.

When the Canaanites had been subjugated, another and far more dangerous foe appeared. The Philistines (from whom we get the word Palestine) came originally from southern Asia Minor and from certain Mediterranean islands, chiefly Crete. Capable and warlike, they drove the Hebrews to the hill country.

About 1025 B.C., however, the Hebrews, led by Saul, a popular leader who was made king, began a series of revolts against the Philistines. Saul was defeated and thereupon committed suicide, but his place was taken by David, who, like Saul, was a military man. He was in addition endowed with religious fervor and a strong capacity for political leadership. King David (1000-960 B.C.) made Jerusalem, an impregnable stronghold, the center of his power and speedily subjugated the Philistines. A promising kingdom was now established, the strongest in the region of Palestine-Syria.

Palestine reached the height of its influence and power during the reign of Solomon, David's son (see map, page 56). Solomon became one of the leading patrons of trade in the Near East. He owned a fleet in partnership with the king of Tyre. Living in oriental luxury, he loved display and built a magnificent

temple at Jerusalem. His influence and power enabled him to claim a daughter of a pharaoh as his wife. But his kingdom was short-lived. Solomon taxed his people so heavily that discontent was aroused, which led in his son's reign to the secession of the northern part of Palestine. There were now two Hebrew kingdoms, Israel in the north and Judah in the south. Thus weakened, the Hebrews were in no position to defend themselves. In 722 B.C. the Assyrians captured the capital of Israel, and the northern kingdom came to an end. The Assyrian king Sennacherib then attacked Jerusalem, but a mysterious plague decimated his army, and for the time being Judah was saved (see II Kings 19:32-37). But in 586 B.C. Nebuchadnezzar, the Chaldean from Babylonia, destroyed Jerusalem and carried the inhabitants into exile. The Hebrew nation had been conquered after only some 450 years of existence. Following the defeat of the Chaldeans by the Persians about fifty years later, however, the Hebrews were permitted to return to Jerusalem, where they restored the temple destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar.

After Persian rule came that of the Greeks and the Romans. The Jews rebelled against the rule of the Roman Caesars. For four years savage fighting desolated the Holy Land, and in 70 A.D. Jerusalem was totally destroyed and her population massacred or scattered. The Jews were driven to all parts of the earth, and the Diaspora—the "scattering"—was at its height.

The story of the past nineteen centuries is replete with sorrow and tragedy for the Jewish people. To the miseries of the medieval ghetto (the residence quarter to which the Jew was restricted) was added the horror of the pogrom (organized massacre) in early modern times, and during the past ten years there has been brutal persecution in many lands, especially in Nazi Germany. Only with this background in mind can one understand present-day Jewish Zionism, the effort to create a new homeland in modern Palestine.

**The Hebrew religion.** In the beginning, Hebrew religion was a primitive polytheism, or worship of many gods. Gradually there was developed the concept of one tribal god, Yahveh (Jehovah), who was a stern, warlike deity. After their entrance into Palestine many of the Hebrews adopted the religious customs of the Canaanites as well as their more sophisticated

and luxurious manner of living. This was especially true of the northern Hebrews. In the south there was much resentment against the renunciation of Hebrew traditions. Many people chafed against the growth of wealth and consequent social injustice in the north and idealized the simplicity and purity of the old folk traditions, the adventures of the patriarchs such as Abraham, Isaac, and Joseph.

About 750 B.C. a succession of great spiritual leaders, the Hebrew Prophets, began to try to purge Hebrew thought and religion of all corrupting influence in order to elevate and dignify the concept of Yahveh. In inspired messages such Prophets as Amos, Isaiah, and Ezekiel taught that the Hebrew God was a loving Father, that He alone was the only and the true God of the universe. During the Babylonian captivity the Hebrew exiles at first seemed crushed by their misfortune, but a great unknown Prophet again emphasized in a series of soul-stirring speeches that Yahveh was the sole God and that the tribulations of the Hebrews were according to God's design, for only through suffering could a people be prepared for true greatness. When Cyrus the Persian defeated the Chaldeans, and the Hebrews were permitted to return to Palestine, they came back with renewed faith in their destiny and a new comprehension of their religion. They had now attained a monotheistic religion, that is, a belief in one God. Coupled with this was their belief that a Messiah would arise among them to establish an ideal order on earth.

Upon the return to Jerusalem the old writings of the Law, the Prophets, and the Psalms were arranged and collected. It was not until Christian times that these were put into one book, which we call the Old Testament. Its influence upon western civilization is incalculable. The phraseology of the Bible has become an integral part of nearly all European languages. We unconsciously use such Biblical expressions as "a land flowing with milk and honey," "eat, drink, and be merry," "a still, small voice," "an apple of one's eye," and such suggestions as "Put not thy trust in princes," "Go to the ant, thou sluggard," and "Righteousness exalteth a nation." An example of the great literature to be found in the Old Testament is this famous passage from the Book of Ecclesiastes, at the top of the next page.

Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them;

While the sun, or the light, or the moon, or the stars, be not darkened, nor the clouds return after the rain:

In the day when the keepers of the house shall tremble, and the strong men shall bow themselves, and the grinders cease because they are few, and those that look out of the windows be darkened,

And the doors shall be shut in the streets; when the sound of the grinding is low, and he shall rise up at the voice of the bird, and

all the daughters of music shall be brought low;

Also when they shall be afraid of that which is high, and fears shall be in the way, and the almond tree shall flourish, and the grasshopper shall be a burden, and desire shall fail: because man goeth to his long home, and the mourners go about the streets:

Or ever the silver cord be loosed, or the golden bowl be broken, or the pitcher be broken at the fountain, or the wheel broken at the cistern.

Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it.<sup>12</sup>

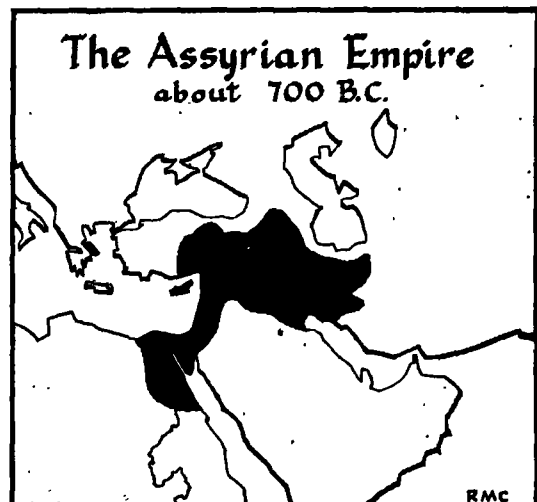
### *The Period of Assyrian Dominance*

**Assyrian expansion.** By 700 B.C., although Lydia and the Hebrew kingdom of Judah still retained their independence, the era of such small states as those of the Arameans, Phoenicians, and Hebrews was ended. A new power, Assyria, was ready to make a bid for empire which was to give her complete mastery of the Fertile Crescent in just three generations. The secret of her meteoric rise lies in the nature of her people and in her geographical position. Assyria was a highland region overlooking the Tigris River north of Babylon. Unlike Egypt, which was favored with protective barriers along most of her frontier, this country lay open on all sides to attack and invasion. For a thousand years the Assyrians were forced to struggle for survival, especially against the Babylonians and the Hittites. In the face of constant menace from invasion, Assyria had to conquer or be destroyed. Racially the Assyrians were a mixed stock, predominantly Semitic. Cradled in the invigorating climate of a highland region and schooled for a thousand years by constant war, the Assyrians, mostly peasants, became redoubtable soldiers.

After several short periods of expansion, the Assyrians began their course of imperial conquest just before the close of the tenth century B.C. In 910 Babylon was conquered. A generation later Ashurnasirpal II (884-860 B.C.) conducted a series of brilliant campaigns against the Arameans and marched to the Mediterranean. After a brief period of decline, the process of expansion was again taken up by the Assyrian emperor Tiglath-Pileser, who

again subdued Babylonia and recovered control over Syria. In 722 B.C. a new dynasty took over the government of Assyria. Its first emperor was Sargon II, who inaugurated a program of conquest which was to make Assyria the complete master of the Fertile Crescent by 700 B.C. The great Assyrian conqueror took the name of Sargon after the ruler of the first Semitic empire in the Tigris-Euphrates valley, some eighteen hundred years previously.

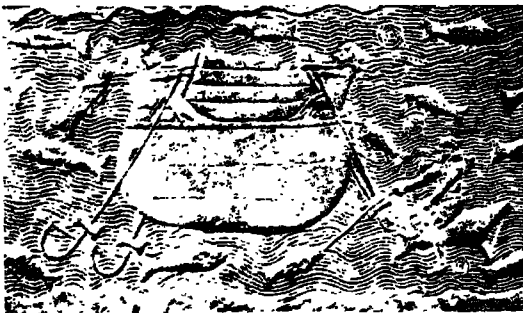
**Assyrian methods of warfare.** Sargon II and his descendants were the architects of the greatest empire in the western world before the sixth century B.C. What was the secret of its creation? The answer is threefold: a matchless army, the terrorization of all people who resisted As-





*Two Assyrian generals, making camp for the night, talk things over and perhaps exchange a toast. At the right a servant is making the bed for them. Outside the tent the camels and goats are settling down for the night on the desert.*

syrian rule, and the most advanced system of provincial administration thus far developed by any people. The Assyrian empire existed by and for its army, which was the most highly trained and most efficient of its day. It was the first to be completely equipped with iron weapons. The bow, with vicious iron-tipped arrows, was its principal weapon. After a stream of well-directed arrows had weakened the enemy, the Assyrian heavy cavalry and chariots would smash with relentless fury the ranks of their foes, driving them headlong from the field. All the ancient world dreaded these fighters, "whose arrows were sharp and all their bows bent; the horses' hooves were like flint and their wheels like a whirlwind."<sup>18</sup>



*These four Assyrians seem to be rowing their boat in opposite directions. At the right is a man fishing from a goatskin filled with air. The fancy stream is the Tigris.*

After victory came great feasts and celebrations of triumph. Huge parades were held in which the conquering soldiers showed off their booty and long lines of miserable prisoners who were soon to suffer cruel deaths of torture. The climax came in an orgy of feasting and drinking in which the whole populace participated.

The second factor explaining the success of the Assyrians in making their empire was their use of systematic terrorization. Perhaps no people in history have been so frankly cruel and heartless. Following a battle the Assyrian soldiers would search the field for wounded foes, whose heads would be cut off and brought back to camp. Assyrian military history is a dreadful chronicle of massacres, the burning of cities, and barbarous cruelties to captives. In boasting of his exploits, one Assyrian emperor inscribed on a monument, "Their booty and possessions, cattle, sheep, I carried away; many captives I burned with fire. I reared a column of the living and a column of heads. I hung up on high their heads on trees in the vicinity of their city. Their boys and girls I burned up in flame. I devastated the city, dug it up, in fire burned it; I annihilated it."<sup>14</sup>

**Assyrian political administration.** The third factor in the success of the Assyrian empire was the well coordinated system of political administration developed by its rulers. Here the Assyrians made their one valuable contribution. Within the empire a closely knit cosmopolitan civilization developed, for now there was peaceful contact and trade among heretofore warring peoples. The forcible transplantation of people from their homeland after conquest by the Assyrians, although an inhuman act, in the long run served to make civilization more cosmopolitan, to bring the inventions and customs of one people to the attention of others. The advent of the Assyrians brought a new epoch in political history. By using new agencies of internal organization and centralization, they created a better coordinated state than the Egyptian empire. Royal messengers continually traversed the empire, carrying the dictates of the emperor to his provincial governors. Communication between the ruler and his governors required roads, and thus the earliest system of nation-wide highways was inaugurated. The Assyrians also developed the first postal system.

**Art and architecture.** In order to glorify themselves and enhance their prestige, As-

syrian rulers built imposing and luxurious palaces. Sargon's palace at Khorsabad, built into the wall of the city, was on a high platform, and its walls were thick and heavy, like a fortress. It contained not only the king's living quarters and the royal stables but also a temple and a ziggurat. The arch, borrowed from Babylonia, became an impressive feature in Assyrian palace gates.

To guard the palace gateways, the Assyrians installed huge human-headed winged bulls carved from imported stone (page 62). In these and other Assyrian motifs can be seen combinations of beasts later used in European heraldry. These impressive creatures were carved with five legs so that they would not seem to be lacking a leg when seen from the front or the side. The Assyrians knew a great deal about the anatomy of men and animals. They exaggerated and stylized muscles, suggesting strength and brutality. Beards and hair were also treated in conventionalized fashion.

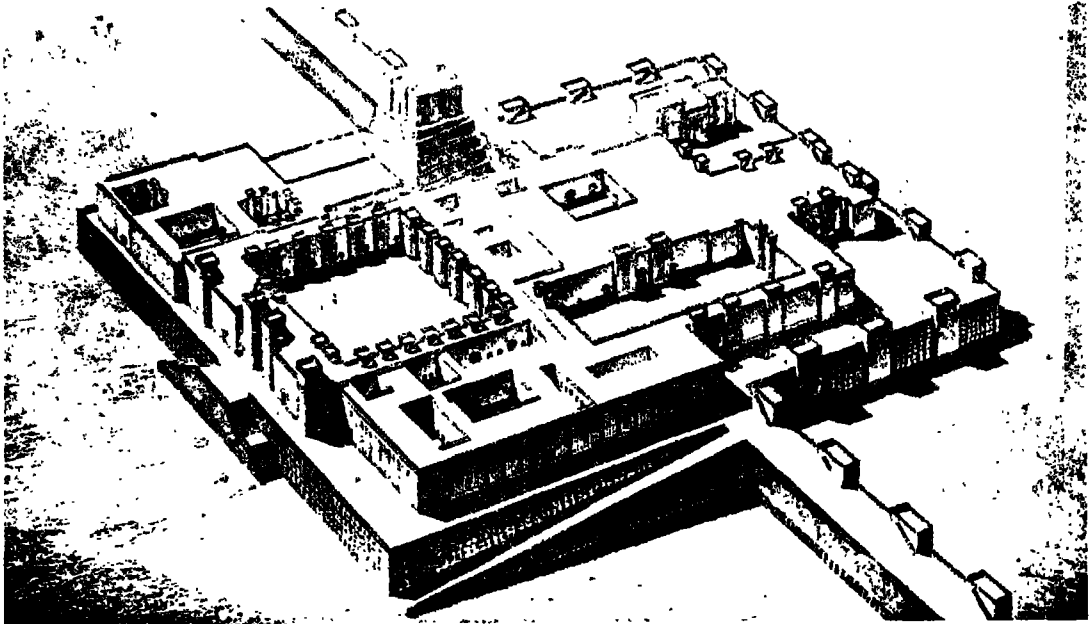
The inside brick walls of the royal palaces were masked below with stone reliefs and painted above in bright colors. Assyrian cruelty and ferocity are reflected in the vigorous reliefs, especially in battle and hunting scenes. Although the men's beards and hair and the lions' muscles, manes, and claws in the



LION HUNT FROM ASSURBANIPAL'S PALACE

above relief are all stylized, the figures are remarkably real, in contrast to the static and monumental winged bull. The winged bulls functioned primarily as symbolic architectural decoration, while the reliefs depicted action or told a story.

*Assurbanipal's library.* Assyrian kings were apparently interested in preserving the past.



SARGON II'S FORTRESS-PALACE AT KHORSABAD (RECONSTRUCTION)





WINGED BULL FROM SARGON'S PALACE

The annals of the kings were kept with unrivaled exactness. The emperor Assurbanipal collected over 22,000 clay tablets, comprising the first great library. At immense cost and effort the knowledge of the Fertile Crescent was gathered for the royal bibliophile. Sumerian hymns, temple rituals, myths of creation and the deluge, grammars, and medical texts found their way to his library. On each tablet was the emperor's mark of ownership, and just as a modern library stamps a warning on its books against surreptitious removal, Assurbanipal had inscribed on his tab-

lets: "Whosoever shall carry off this tablet . . . may Assur and Belit overthrow him in wrath and anger, and destroy his home and posterity in the land."<sup>15</sup>

***Decline of Assyria.*** The Assyrian empire obtained its main resources from booty and conquest. The failure of such a system was inevitable in the long run. About the middle of the seventh century B.C. evidences of decline became apparent. The sturdy Assyrian stock had been decimated by the long series of wars, the task of ruling such a huge empire was proving too difficult for the ruling class, and finally the cruelties of the Assyrians had made implacable foes intent on their downfall. To the south, Babylonia had come under the control of a new group of Semites, the Chaldeans, who revolted against Assyrian rule. Wild tribes roamed north of the Fertile Crescent, constantly threatening Assyrian frontiers. Also to the north and northeast, the Indo-European Medes and Persians were on the march. By 616 B.C. the Chaldeans had captured Babylonia, and in 612 these people, joining the Medes, attacked Nineveh, the Assyrian capital, which was captured and totally destroyed. Not one building was left standing. From one end of the Fertile Crescent to the other there was rejoicing over the extermination of Assyria. In the words of the Hebrew Prophet Nahum, "All that look upon thee shall flee from thee and say, 'Nineveh is laid waste.'"

With the exception of their animal sculpture, their innovations in military science, and their ability as imperial administrators, the Assyrians made few original contributions to civilization. Their role was rather one of borrowing from the cultures of other peoples, unifying the best elements into a new product, and assisting in its dissemination over the Fertile Crescent.

### *New Babylonia: The Empire of the Chaldeans*

***The kingdom of the Medes.*** The destruction of the Assyrian empire in 612 B.C. left four powers to struggle over its legacy, the Medes and Persians, the Chaldeans, Egypt, and Lydia. The Medes were an Indo-European people who by 1000 B.C. had established themselves just east of Assyria. In the eighth century B.C. they had managed to create a strong kingdom with Ecbatana as capital. Under

King Cyaxaras the Medes had extended their overlordship to the Persians, who lived east of the Tigris. The Persians were of the same racial ancestry as the Medes and for a time were content to be their vassals.

***New Babylonia.*** While the Median kingdom controlled the highland region, the Chaldeans, with their capital at Babylon, were masters of the Fertile Crescent. Nebuchad-

nezzar, becoming Chaldean king in 604 B.C., raised Babylonia to another epoch of brilliance after over 1000 years of weakness following the reign of Hammurabi. Nebuchadnezzar routed the Egyptians from Syria, thus terminating Egyptian aspiration to re-create another empire. When the little Hebrew kingdom of Judah rebelled against his rule, the Chaldean king destroyed Jerusalem (586 B.C.) and carried several thousand Hebrew captives to Babylon.

Babylon was now rebuilt and became one of the greatest cities of its day. Herodotus, the Greek historian, has left us a graphic description of its huge size and the tremendous walls that were wide enough at the top to have rows of small houses on each side with a space between them large enough for the passage of a chariot. In the center of the city ran the famous Procession Street, which passed through Ishtar Gate. This great arch, still standing, is the best example of Chaldean architecture. In the city there were also several imposing temples, the grandest of which was dedicated to the Chaldean deity Marduk. There was also the immense palace of Nebuchadnezzar. Inclosed by walls, the palace towered terrace upon terrace, each resplendent with masses of fernery, flowers, and trees. These roof gardens, the famous Hanging Gardens, were so beautiful that they were selected by the Greeks as one of the seven wonders of the ancient world.

**Chaldean astronomy.** New Babylonia made few original contributions to civilization apart from the field of science, but in astronomy her influence was profound. The Babylonians were interested in the stars as a means of foretelling the future. The observation of the stars with the view of showing their influence upon human affairs is called astrology, a pseudoscience which still persists today. A reminder of its influence exists in our lan-



guage idiom when we refer to our "lucky star" or to an "ill-starred venture." The interest of the Chaldeans in the heavens led to the identification of the twelve groups of stars identified under the twelve signs of the zodiac. Five planets were considered especially fateful in controlling the destinies of men. The names of the five most important Chaldean gods were applied to the five fateful stars. Later the Romans substituted the names of their gods. Thus the planet Marduk became Jupiter, Nabu was changed to Mercury, Ishtar to Venus, and so on.

Even though astronomy was primitive and illogical, it encouraged the systematic observation of the heavens. Astrology had been practiced in Old Babylon, but Chaldean observations were much more accurate and complete. The prediction of eclipses was common, and continuous observations of the heavens were made for over three hundred years. One of the foremost Chaldean astronomers computed the length of the year to within twenty-six minutes.

### *The Persian Empire*

**Persian expansion.** During the long reign of Nebuchadnezzar, some forty years, Babylon flourished, but at his death the power he had evolved rapidly crumbled. In the latter years of his reign a new people, the Persians, began to assume the offensive. They threw off the Median yoke and captured Ecbatana in 549 B.C. The Medes apparently readily ac-

cepted their new ruler, the redoubtable Cyrus the Great. Within twenty years the Persian leader had created a great empire. His first opponent was wealthy King Croesus of Lydia, who met defeat in 546 B.C. At the same time Cyrus assumed control of the Greek Ionian cities and then turned east, establishing his power as far as the frontier of India. Babylon



*These old men are subjects from Syria on the other side of the Fertile Crescent, bringing gifts to the emperor at Persepolis—gold vessels, bracelets, horses, even a chariot. This relief decorated a wall of Xerxes' palace at Persepolis.*

was next on his list, for in 539 B.C. without resistance the city capitulated to the Persian host. Following the death of Cyrus, his son Cambyses conquered Egypt. The next ruler, Darius, crossed the Hellespont and annexed Macedonia and Thrace to his empire.

It now appeared as if the promising Greek city-states would also be crushed by the Persian steam roller. In 493 B.C. Darius began his first campaigns against Greece. They precipitated a bitter struggle in which the Greeks, fighting heroically, not only repelled the invasion but ultimately, under Alexander the Great, carried the war into the enemy's territory and crushed the great Persian army. All of this will be told in Chapter 5.

**Persian imperial administration.** The governmental structure designed by the Persian rulers to administer their extensive dominions was built upon the Assyrian model but was far more efficient than its predecessor. The Persian imperial system was first devised by Cyrus the Great and carried to completion by Darius. The empire was divided into twenty-one provinces, or satrapies, each under a provincial governor called a satrap. To check the satraps, a secretary and a military official representing the king were also installed in every province. Special inspectors, "the Eyes and Ears of the King," were also sent to the satrapies to report on the administrative methods of the satraps.

A great empire must possess good communications. Realizing that need, the Persians built great imperial post roads, which in the

thoroughness of their construction rivaled the later Roman roads. The main highways connected the four capitals, Susa, Ecbatana, Babylon, and Persepolis, which had been established in various parts of the empire. Along the Royal Road between Sardis and Susa there was a post station every fourteen miles, where fresh horses could be obtained by the king's messengers. By means of this first "pony express," royal messengers could cover a distance of 1500 miles in a little more than seven days, while ordinary travelers took three months.

Persian rulers demonstrated a high sense of responsibility toward all their subjects, alien or Persian. In fact, the Persian empire was the first attempt at governing many different racial groups on the principle of equal rights and responsibilities for all peoples. In their treatment of subject peoples there was a humaneness and spirit of consideration which had been absent in the Assyrian empire. The Persians respected the gods of all conquered people. The king made the prosperity of every part of the empire his concern, in order that all provinces would be enabled to provide the tribute levied against them. The tax burden, however, was not excessive. The introduction of a uniform system of coinage also did much to weld the empire together.

**Zoroastrianism.** The religion of the Persians was founded by a prophet named Zoroaster (called Zarathustra by the ancient Greeks). The date of his birth is a matter of dispute. Tradition places it about 1000 B.C., but the most recent scholarship puts his birth at 660

B.C. Zoroaster taught that there was a continuous struggle in the world between two great cosmic forces. Mazda, or Ahura Mazda, symbolized righteousness; Ahriman was the summation of everything evil. The sayings and legends concerning Zoroaster were collected early in the Christian era and made into a sacred book called the *Zend-Avesta*. In it the principle of good is referred to as "Ahura Mazda, the creator, radiant, glorious, greatest and best, most beautiful, most firm, wisest, most perfect, the most bounteous spirit." The *Avesta* contained significant ideas on how the world would come to an end. The last days were conceived as involving a mighty battle between Mazda and Ahriman in which the forces of good should prevail. Then would come a last judgment involving a heaven for some and a hell for others. The word paradise is Persian in its origin.

The wise toleration of the Persian rulers was perhaps a result of their religion. In describing some of his victories, Darius, on the famous Behistun monument, declares:

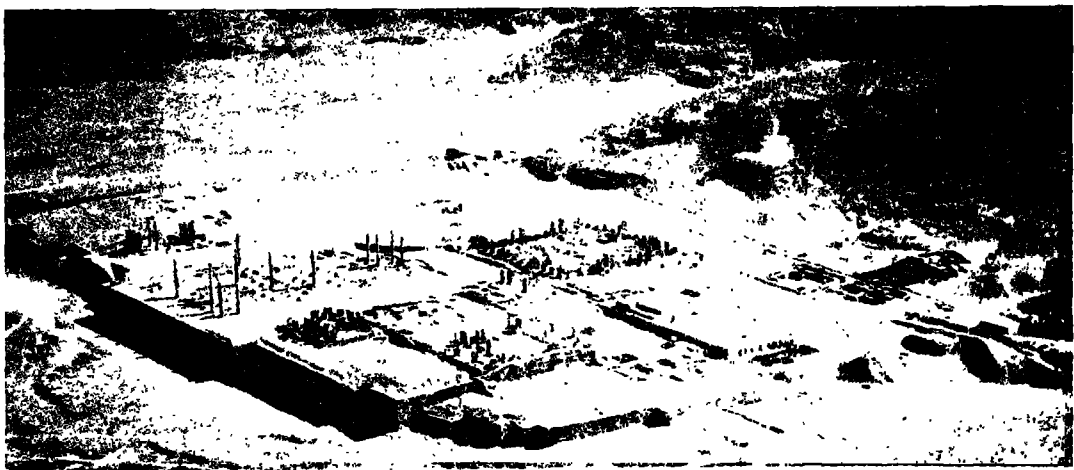
"On this account Ahura Mazda brought me help . . . because I was not wicked, nor was I a liar, nor was I a tyrant, neither I nor any of my line. I have ruled according to righteousness."<sup>16</sup>

The followers of Zoroaster are sometimes called fire worshipers, because they regard fire as a symbol of the deity of light and purity. Their religion still persists among a group of about 100,000 people called Parsees, who live in and around the city of Bombay in India.

### The Persian Empire about 500 B.C.



**Art.** The art of the Persians is not very original. They borrowed from their predecessors in the Fertile Crescent, especially the Assyrians. Their most important work was in palace architecture. The royal residences at Persepolis are the best remaining evidence of Persian building. Here a high terrace, or platform, was constructed, reached by a grand stairway, the face of which was covered with beautiful relief sculptures. The practice of raising the palace on a platform originated as a protection against disease from the swamps. Other features were brilliantly colored enameled bricks, entrances flanked by huge human-headed bulls, and numerous columns to support the roof. The columns were topped by



THE RUINED PALACE OF XERXES AT PERSEPOLIS, SHOWING COLUMNS AND TYPICAL PALACE PLATFORM

large heads of bulls, used for capitals as the Egyptians had used lotus motifs. Upon the terrace stood a number of palaces and halls used for audience chambers. The walls of the

buildings were covered with brilliant enameled tiles. The arch was not copied from Babylonia; doors were capped with horizontal blocks of stone in the Egyptian fashion.

### *Summary*

The evolution of human affairs in the Ancient Near East from primitive culture to civilization has now been recounted. The principal areas concerned were Egypt at the western terminus of the Fertile Crescent, Syria-Palestine, forming the western band of the Crescent, and Assyria and Babylonia, constituting the eastern bow. Civilization rose about the same time in the western and eastern ends of the Fertile Crescent, that is, in Egypt and in the plain of Shinar, later to be called Babylonia. Both those civilizations were river-made, one by the Nile, the other by the Tigris and Euphrates rivers. Natural barriers forming a defense for Egypt explain the almost uninterrupted continuity of its civilization. Along the Fertile Crescent, however, there were constant fighting and movements of people, owing to the absence of any such barriers. The history of that region, then, is a rather complex account of the rise and fall of numerous nations.

The story of Old Babylonia is primarily concerned with the significant achievements of the Sumerians and the later adoption of their civilization by Semitic invaders. The most important of the Semitic states was Babylon, created by the great Semitic leader Hammurabi. Following an era of brilliant civilization in Old Babylonia, attention was focused on Syria-Palestine. There the duel between Egypt and the Hittite empire, which weakened both contestants, gave small nations, Phoenicia, the Arameans, and the Hebrews, a chance to enjoy a brief period of independence. Political diversity was ended by the rise of the Assyrian empire, which had a span of about three hundred years (900-600 B.C.). The fall of Assyria left four peoples to contest for the crumbs of empire: the Egyptians, the Lydians, the Medes and Persians, and the Chaldeans. At the outset New Babylonia, or Chaldea, under the great Nebuchadnezzar was the center of a brilliant and powerful civilization, but the expansion of Persia quickly terminated its independence. Persia became the greatest empire the world had yet seen; it even endeavored to extend its power over ancient Greece.

If the Paleolithic and Neolithic periods represent the first great chapter of progress in human history, the accomplishments in the Ancient Near East represent a second. There metals were first used on an extensive scale and the wheeled vehicle, the plow, and irrigation introduced. Seagoing ships were built first by the Egyptians, the use of coinage was spread by the Lydians, and business contractual instruments were developed by the Babylonians. In engineering, the Egyptians demonstrated remarkable skill in transporting tremendously heavy blocks of stone over long distances and then elevating them to great heights. During this early period in the history of man, warfare was put on a firm basis by the Sumerians and then developed to a high degree of efficiency by the Assyrians. Great political states were created in which there were remarkable centralization and coordination in administration. Writing was evolved as early as 4000 B.C.; later the Phoenicians made a notable contribution in devising an alphabet. In architec-

ture the Egyptians evolved many of the basic features which were later developed to perfection by the Greeks. Sculpture was used with regard to its architectural setting, and Egyptian mural painters were highly skilled.

In the Tigris and Euphrates valley the outstanding artistic contributions were in palace building and sculpture. In the building of palaces some of the Mesopotamian peoples used the arch and narrow vault successfully though not extensively. The Assyrian use of the arch may have influenced the Romans, and certainly some of their decorative animal motifs influenced later heraldry. In sculpture there were some beautiful wall decorations, especially in the Assyrian period. The greatest gift in literature was the Hebrew Bible, but mention should also be made of the Mesopotamian epics of the flood and creation and the Persian holy *Zend-Avesta*. Finally in religion, the Ancient Near East contributed some notable religious concepts.

Such is the role of the Ancient Near East in world history. But after several thousand years of advance, progress seemed to level off and almost entirely cease. One great bar to progress was that in all the countries of the Near East there was no thought of political liberty or the right of the individual to have a part in the affairs of government. Coupled with the despotism of kings was the tyranny of priests. The old gods had to be obeyed, old customs and mores implicitly accepted. There was little opportunity for speculation, and society tended to become more and more static.

## ANCIENT INDIA: PALEOLITHIC TIMES TO 500 B.C.

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### c. 10,000-4000 B.C. Development of Paleolithic and Neolithic Cultures

#### c. 4000-2500 Indus Valley Civilization

Mohenjo-Daro and Harappa  
(Old Kingdom in Egypt, 3400-2475)

Advanced city culture  
Contact with Sumerians  
Remarkable artistic achievements

#### c. 2000-1000 Vedic Age

Indo-Aryans conquer northern India  
Conflict of Aryans with native Dravidians  
(Greeks enter Aegean world, c. 1900)

Origin of caste system  
Vedic literature: *Rig-Veda*  
(Hammurabic Code, c. 1900)

#### c. 1000-500 Epic, or Heroic, Age

Creation of Ganges kingdoms  
(Assyrian empire, 700-600)

Development of caste system  
Epic literature: *Mahabharata*, *Ramayana*  
*Upanishads*, 800-600  
(Greek *Iliad* and *Odyssey* composed, 9th century)

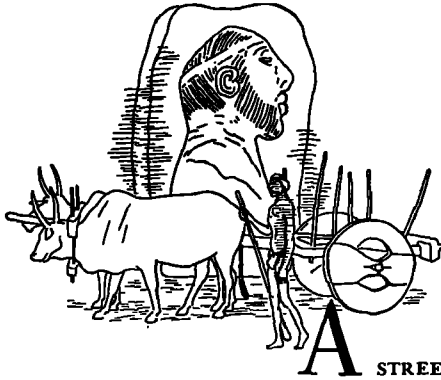
563?-483

Gautama Buddha

Four Noble Truths  
Noble Eightfold Path

## CHAPTER 3

# *The Indus and the Ganges*



**A** STREET in the modern, flourishing city of Bombay presents a varied sight. Streetcars clang down the center. Taxis and automobiles draw up to the curb before fine shops displaying English clothes, Parisian perfumes, and American shoes. Along the sidewalks saunter English officers and civil authorities, talking perhaps with a rich Parsee merchant or rajah from one of the provinces to the northwest. At an intersection where a Sikh policeman is directing traffic, a great mass of people push their way in all directions: tall, fair-skinned herdsmen down from the hills of the north, dark-skinned laborers out of the rice plantations, workers hurrying to the jute mills of the city, beggars in rags crying for alms, holy men and fakirs, bazaar-keepers, underfed children eyeing the sweetmeats of the hawkers, and heavily bespangled women with caste marks visible on their foreheads. It is a motley scene. The streetcars and taxis, freighters unloading at the busy docks, and handsome public buildings and railway stations combining English and Indian architecture proclaim the impact of western culture upon this Indian metropolis. But the bazaars, caste marks, religious temples, strange costumes, and the endless variety of languages spoken on every side reveal an indigenous culture which has resisted the west, a culture which is rich, unique, and vivid.

India has been described as one land where the past is never dead. Like China she conquers her conquerors by swallowing them, and invasions have as yet altered her but little. Where Egypt, Greece, and Rome have lived and perished, India remains with much the same culture and outlook as in the days when Troy was being sacked by the Greeks. What is the secret of India's timelessness? The answer lies in her early his-



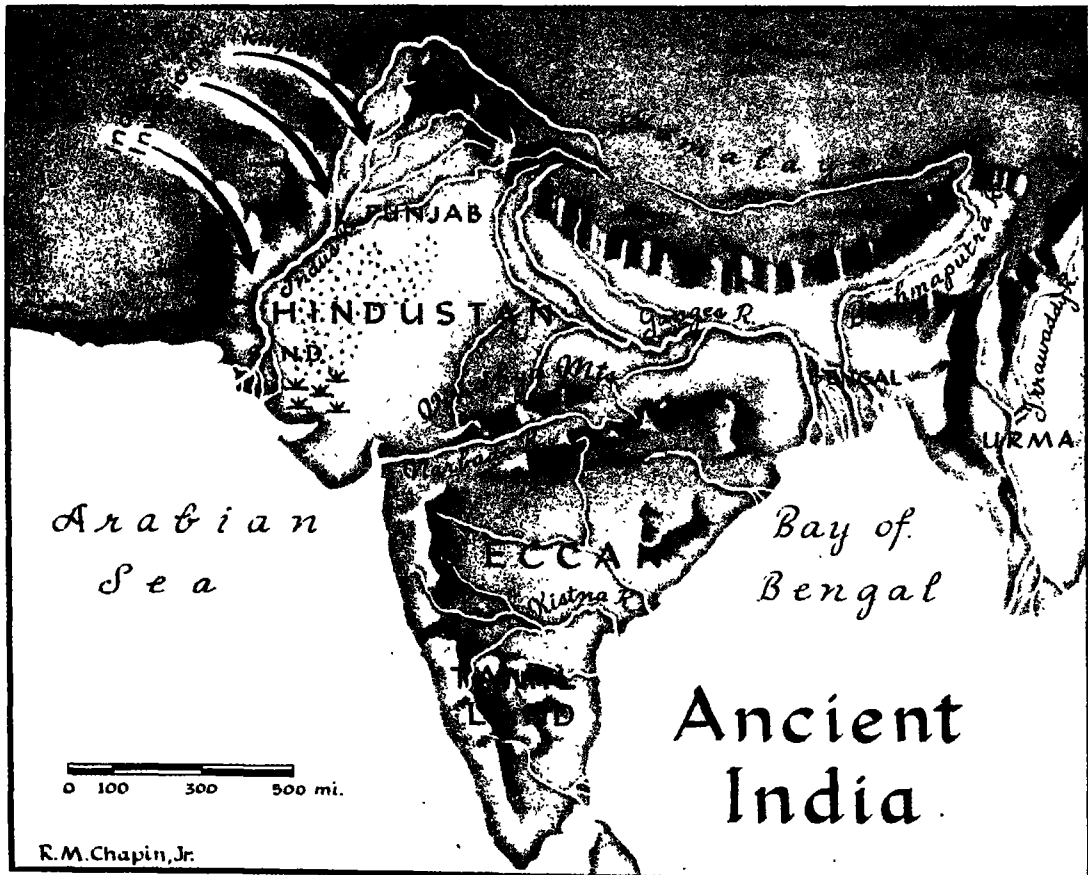
tory, when there was developed an intricate religious theory and a unique pattern of social organization, the famous caste system. Thus the focal point of Indian thought has been religion, and the focal point of Indian society has been caste. Science and inventions have made the west turn from the otherworldliness which it knew in the Middle Ages. But no such transformation has yet occurred in India.

### *Geography and Early Times*

**I**ndian geography. The geography of India gives us many important clues to an understanding of her civilization. A sub-continent of about 1,575,000 square miles, situated largely in the tropics, with a seacoast of some 3400 miles, India contains a population of over 350 million. Thus India has an area about one half that of the United States, a seacoast approximately the length of the overland distance from New York to San Francisco, and a population between two and three times that of America. We can think of India as a gigantic triangle, with two sides bounded by ocean and

the third by the great mountain-wall of the Himalayas, which runs along India's northern frontier for 1600 miles. In ancient times India was inaccessible from the sea, and the only approach lay through the mountain passes to the northwest. That fact has colored all Indian history, for down the passes have swarmed armed conquerors, restless tribes, and merchants from the west. In modern times Great Britain, by gaining control of the seas, has been able to conquer and dominate India without having to enter through the mountain passes.

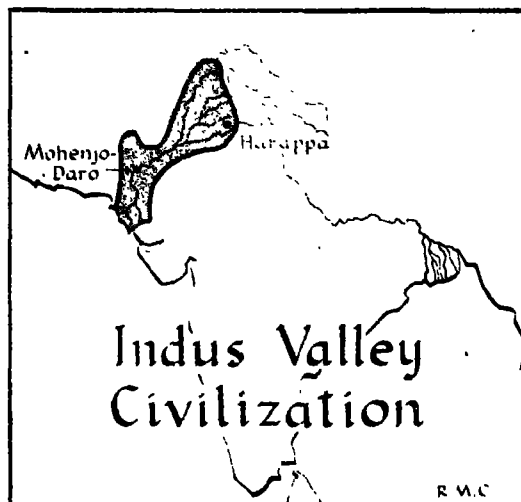
India can be conveniently separated into



three principal divisions. The area north of the Narbada River is called Hindustan; the area as far south as the Kistna River is known as the Deccan, and the remaining territory down to the southern tip of India is called the Far South, or Tamil Land. Northern India is separated clearly from the Deccan and Tamil Land by the Vindhya Mountains, a sandstone range about 3000 feet in height, once covered with an impenetrable jungle. This barrier prevented early northern invaders from penetrating successfully into the Deccan plateau and Tamil Land. Our interest lies principally in the events that took place in Hindustan and, especially during the earliest historical period, in the basin of the Indus. For in the alluvial plain watered by the Indus and four of its tributaries (called the Punjab, or Land of the Five Rivers) and in the territory to the south of that plain (called Sind, the land of the Sindhus, the ancient name for the Indus) India developed its first real civilization. Although the Indus was the initial home of Indian civilization, we shall find that after the Indo-Aryan people invaded India, they spread eastward until in the Epic Age (1000-500 B.C.) they were creating kingdoms along the Ganges valley. In Hindustan, in the valleys of the Indus and Ganges, India developed the culture of her present.

**The earliest cultures.** The earliest inhabitants of India had a culture at least as primitive as that of other Paleolithic peoples. Both Paleolithic and Neolithic remains have been found scattered throughout the entire peninsula. In southern India Neolithic man became fairly civilized, making use of the potter's wheel, domesticating the dog, goat, and ox, fashioning ornaments out of conches, pearls, and gold, hollowing out timber, dressing skins, and cultivating crops. Later, stone tools were replaced by iron in the south and copper in the north. There appears to have been no Bronze Age in India, but probably long before 5000 B.C. iron tools and weapons had become common.

The early cultures of India were mainly fluvial. Large numbers of inhabitants congregated along the river banks. We have seen that early Near Eastern cultures were fluvial mainly because of the fertility of the soil in the river valleys. Nearly all Indian soil is fertile in comparison with the semidesert conditions of Egypt and Mesopotamia. Thus rivers in India were primarily important not as factors in the



productivity of the soil but as means of water supply and especially as paths of communication through mountainous regions and jungle.

**The Indus valley civilization.** As a result of archaeological studies carried on under the direction of Sir John Herbert Marshall, an ancient civilization of high attainments has been located in the Indus valley, principally at the sites of Harappa and Mohenjo-Daro. The culture must have spread over a wide area, for these two cities are four hundred miles apart. The probable extent of this ancient culture is shown in the map above.

Excavations at Mohenjo-Daro revealed that it had been a well-laid-out town with streets at right angles, the principal one thirty-three feet wide. The flat-roofed buildings, of burnt brick held together by mud and mortar, were possibly several stories high. While the city evidently had no temples, there was a public bath. Mohenjo-Daro had a drainage system of terra-cotta pipes (still sound after almost five thousand years) and houses with bathrooms. Thus the city was far in advance of European towns thousands of years later.

The dwellers of the metropolis were artistic, as is evidenced by the large collection of soapstone seals and amulets (charms) which have been found. Tigers, elephants, bulls, rhinoceri, buffaloes, crocodiles, and antelopes (the cow and horse are missing) are represented on these ornaments. Small, beautiful statues made of clay, children's toys in bird and animal forms, and exquisite pottery of highly burnished red ochre decorated with figures of trees and animals have also been discovered.



*Aloofness and hauteur mark a precisely-ornamented Indian statue found at Mohenjo-Daro.*

Their clever metalwork is shown in beakers of copper, silver, and lead, their metal saws, chisels, knives, and razors, and their splendid bronze statues. Jewelry, such as beads of carnelian and bangles and necklaces of gold and lapis lazuli, adorned the womenfolk.

The people of Mohenjo-Daro seem to have worshiped the cult of the Mother Goddess, for she was depicted often on seals, amulets, and pottery. Other deities, such as a horned three-faced god, were worshiped as well. Burial was by cremation, the ashes often being placed in urns. Resemblances in pottery, weapons, and tools of the Indus valley people and the Sumerians of the Fertile Crescent indicate a common ancestry. Unquestionably the Indus people invaded India from the west, enslaving or driving away the short, Negroid inhabitants they found there. There may also have been an intermingling of customs and ideas. At any rate a rich and varied civilization, at least as advanced as any in contemporary Egypt or the Fertile Crescent, resulted.

The downfall of the Indus valley culture (about 2500 B.C.) is unknown. Remains gathered by archaeologists indicate that the people of Mohenjo-Daro valued the arts of peace above those of war. Their destruction may have been due to a great flood or to a plague which carried off most of the people. That some tragedy did befall the populace seems evident from the fact that groups of skeletons have been found in some of the rooms, as if the victims had met a common fate.<sup>1</sup>

### *Vedic and Epic India*

**I**ndo-Aryan invasions (2000-1000 B.C.). We are ignorant of the history of India for a period of some five hundred years following the fall of the Indus valley civilization. About 2000 B.C., however, tribes began to enter the land from the northwest. Where did these marauding immigrants come from, and of what race were they? Again the answer is far from certain. Possibly they came originally from central Asia or an area bordering on the shores of the Caspian Sea. Language resemblances as well as religious similarities indicate that they were related to the peoples of the Near East. We may conclude that the Hittites, Medes, Persians, and Aryan-speaking tribes (called Indo-Aryans) which invaded India were branches of the great Indo-European

family which probably had its original home somewhere near the Caspian Sea. The Indo-Aryans began to invade India about the same time that their relatives overran the country of Babylonia.

The Indo-Aryans were a fair-skinned, tall people of strong physique, with long heads, straight noses, and finely developed features. They ate heartily, drank copiously, fought readily, and boasted noisily. At the time of their arrival in India they lived a simple life. Wealth was measured in terms of cattle, and the word for war meant "a desire for more cows." Milk, butter, and grain were the staple foods, although meat was not forbidden. The father of the family was its head, and his sons and grandsons dwelt with their families be-

neath his roof. The father was also the priest of the family, lighting the sacred fire and making sacrifices to the gods. At that time there were no castes. The king, or rajah, at the head of the tribe (made up of numerous families) administered justice or led his people into war. There were also the family priests and the warriors—males of fighting age who formed a council to aid the king. Women occupied a high social status and administered their households. Marriage was monogamous and was forbidden both outside the racial group and between people too closely related.

**The Dravidians.** The Indo-Aryans did not conquer northern India without a struggle. As they pushed slowly eastward along the Indus and Ganges valleys until they occupied all of Hindustan, they came into conflict with the people who had already settled there, also of unknown origin. The entire racial history of India is obscure. The oldest remains go back to an early post-glacial period and seem to indicate a Negroid stock akin to those of Africa. Various invasions into India of primitive Negroid stocks probably took place from time to time, and despite later invasions by Aryan-speaking groups from the north, the south lands of India even today possess remains of the ancient Indo-Negroid races. They have been called Dravidian because *Dravida* was the old name of the Tamil country. It has also been suggested that they were descended from the people who had once inhabited Mohenjo-Daro and Harappa.

At any rate, they appear to have been shorter and darker than the Indo-Aryans and were considered by the latter to be ugly, coarse, and uncivilized. The Aryan-speaking tribesmen looked askance at these "noseless" people who spoke a vulgar tongue so that they seemed to be "yelling hideously like dogs," who ate raw flesh, worshiped strange gods and trees and snakes, and practiced polygamy. Yet, despite such Indo-Aryan opinion of the dark-skinned natives, the Dravidians possessed a civilization superior to that which their conquerors brought from the northwest. They had built castles and large, luxurious cities, were excellent mariners, and had commercial contacts with Babylon and the Sumerians. The Indo-Aryans borrowed many customs and ideas from the Dravidians, including, apparently, their systems of land tenure and taxation and their village community.

**The triumph of the Indo-Aryans.** The Indo-Aryans proved masters of the Dravidians in warfare, however, and the Dravidians were enslaved or driven southward in much the same manner as the North American Indian was pushed back by the American pioneers.

The Indo-Aryans looked upon driving back the Dravidians as a primary duty, and the poems they wrote tell much about the wars between the two peoples. However, many of the invaders intermarried with the Dravidians and began to adopt some of their customs. The Indo-Aryans soon saw that they would be absorbed completely by the more numerous Dravidians, whom they considered inferior, unless they took steps to prevent such intermarriage. This racial restriction was directed mainly at preserving the fair color of the Indo-Aryans. Thus the caste system began to be used not to preserve social status but to preserve, if possible, purity of race. The early word for caste was *varna*, meaning color (it was translated by later Portuguese travelers as *casta*, from the Latin *castus*, meaning pure). The Indo-Aryans as yet placed no caste restrictions upon marriage within their own group.

**Vedic times (2000-1000 B.C.).** Our knowledge of early India is derived largely from the literature of the times. As the first writings of the Indo-Aryans are to be found in the *Vedas*, we call the period which they describe the Vedic Age (about 2000-1000 B.C.). Later, great epic poems—the *Mahabharata* and *Ramayana* especially—were composed to commemorate the heroic deeds of early warriors. We therefore call their period the Heroic, or Epic, Age (about 1000-500 B.C.). The epics throw much light upon contemporary conditions.

When the Indo-Aryan invaders had once conquered the land they began to settle down to a rural existence. They tilled and irrigated the soil, raised barley, millet, wheat, lentils, and sesame. They used oxen for plowing and drawing wagons, raised cattle and ate cow's meat at festivals, and made out of grain an intoxicating drink called *sura*.

Village life was similar to that of modern India. At the head of the village (*grama*) was the headman (*gramani*), sometimes elected and at other times holding his position by hereditary right. The village was composed of a group of families, and villages were scattered over the country at varying distances, connected by roads and tracks. Most of the

village occupations were agricultural—dairying, tanning, spinning wool and weaving cloth, fashioning hoes and plowshares, and making household utensils. The Indo-Aryans owned the lands nearby and considered it a disgrace to work for someone else.

The houses were made with mud walls, clay floors, and thatched roofs. Clothing consisted principally of a skirt and a shawl worn over the shoulder. Ornaments such as earrings and necklaces were fashionable. There were three modes of marriage: consent, purchase, and abduction of the bride. The last method was considered a great compliment by the women. Among the rich, polygamy was sometimes practiced; however most Indo-Aryans were monogamists. During Vedic times the status of women was high. They mingled freely with the rest of society at public occasions, joined in religious sacrifices, and were free to engage in intellectual pursuits. The practices of *purdah* (seclusion of women) and the *suttee* (self-destruction of a widow on her husband's funeral pyre) were rare until later ages. Among the popular amusements were gambling, dancing, chariot racing (for the upper classes), music, and listening to tribal bards.

**The Epic Age (1000-500 B.C.).** Society in the Epic, or Heroic, Age was quite similar to that of the Homeric Age of Greece, as we shall see in Chapter 5. The Indo-Aryans had been expanding eastward and creating kingdoms along the Ganges valley. These kingdoms were small, isolated city-states. There was no central authority; each kingdom was a unit in itself. The epics tell of constant warfare among the kingdoms, with occasional alliances between some of them in order to wage war against others.

The cities of the Epic Age were surrounded by moats and walls, and their streets were well planned, lighted, and even cleaned. In the center stood the palace of the king, or *rajah*. His powers were greater than those of the village headman of Vedic times. Like the later Germanic chieftains he was surrounded with a faithful retinue of followers who pledged to him their personal loyalty and followed him into battle, receiving in return weapons, food, and honors. While the king's political powers were very great, he was responsible for the protection of his subjects and the administration of justice. To advise and help him, he had a royal council, composed of his relatives and

nobles. He received taxes from the people and probably was the owner (in theory at least) of all land. He made foreign alliances personally and often cemented political agreements with marriage ties.

Besides the king and the warrior class, other groups were coming into prominence. The priest still occupied a subordinate place in society, as there was yet no definite, formalized religion. The family priest persisted from Vedic times and officiated at the numerous and expensive sacrifices. In the cities a kind of middle class was rising. The variety of occupations indicates the advanced development of Epic life: metalworkers, wood-workers, stone-workers, leather-workers, glass-makers, ivory-workers, basket-makers, house-painters, potters, dyers, fishermen, sailors, butchers, barbers, shampooers, florists, cooks, confectioners, physicians, armorers, incense sellers, tailors, goldsmiths, actors, and washermen. The menial tasks were performed by slaves—captives, debtors, and members of the Dravidian group. Although the slaves possessed no legal privileges, they were apparently well treated.

The epics indicate that as in Vedic times women were socially well-off, although *suttee* was increasing. Polygamy was also much more common now than during the Vedic Age, but polyandry was exceptional. Favorite pastimes of the privileged were hunting, gambling, fighting, and watching the performances of dancing girls. The cow was now considered sacred (for reasons which we shall discuss later), but other forms of flesh were eaten. A strong alcoholic beverage called *soma* was in use.

**Economic developments of Epic times.** Trade was steadily advancing. Two-wheeled wagons carried produce overland, but the bad roads and numerous taxes which had to be paid at every frontier must have proved discouraging. River and ocean commerce increased, thanks particularly to the Dravidians, who were skilled in navigation. About 860 B.C. ships carrying Indian perfumes, silks, spices, muslins, and precious stones made their way to Egypt, Arabia, and Mesopotamia. In early times there was no coinage, and trade was carried on by barter. Then cattle became the currency (brides were often purchased with cows), giving way later to a copper coinage. By the time of Buddha (about the close of the Epic Age) a credit system had been evolved. Merchants in various cities made use of letters

of credit, and loans were being made at eighteen-per-cent interest.

**Growth of the caste system.** We saw earlier that the first caste division dealt not with social stratification within the Indo-Aryan group but with the separation (along color lines) of the Aryan-speaking invaders and the native Dravidians. During the Epic Age caste became more sharply defined. The division into social groups was not a new phenomenon with the Indo-Europeans. The early Iranians, an Indo-European people, were divided into three classes: priests, warriors, and agriculturists; later the artisans became a fourth class. The four castes evolved by Indo-Aryan society were, in order of their rank, (1) the Brahmins, or priests, (2) the Kshatriyas, or warriors, (3) the Vaisyas, or agriculturists and traders, and (4) the Sudras, or serfs. During the Epic Age the Kshatriyas, or warriors, had a higher social rank than the Brahmins; but as warfare declined in intensity, religion grew in complexity and importance. The priests, as the educators of youth, oral historians of the people, and intermediaries between the gods and men, had assumed a dominant position in Indian society by the close of Epic times, a position which they have successfully maintained down to the present century.

Meanwhile, there had appeared a small group of people who lay outside the four castes. Because they had been captured in warfare or reduced to slavery for some reason, these unfortunates lost all right to caste. Hence they were called outcastes, or pariahs. Their numbers multiplied, until today the British government is faced with the staggering problem of protecting some 40,000,000 "untouchables," whose touch and very shadow are believed to be defiling to a Brahmin.

We have noted that the caste system became more sharply defined during the Epic Age than it had been in Vedic times. In the centuries following the Epic Age the caste system grew more and more complex until it came to have racial, social, political, economic, and religious implications and was split up into thousands of sub-castes.

**Theories of caste history.** Scholars are by no means agreed as to the origin and development of the caste system. Stanley Rice suggests the following plausible view: (1) The Indo-Aryans on their arrival in the country found that the Dravidians already had a sort of caste institution which was designed to keep them apart from the older aborigines; (2) the Indo-Aryans saw that by adopting this custom they might in turn keep themselves apart from the Dravidians, and as the obvious distinction was between the fair and dark-skinned, they named the institution *varna*, or color; (3) the Indo-Aryans probably recalled that their kinsfolk, the Iranians, also possessed a caste division, based on occupations, and this precedent helped confirm their own action; (4) the caste system received religious sanction until as time went on it crystallized into a religious prohibition; and (5) the caste system was bound up with occupational problems, so that it became natural for each task, from that of the lowly flayer of cattle to the powerful Brahmin priest, to be assigned a definite social status and religious purpose.<sup>2</sup>

Caste, as it exists in India today, is the combination of all these factors in varying degrees. If we have dwelt at some length upon the subject, it is because the problems of modern India cannot be understood without a grasp of the complexities of this unique institution.

### *Language, Literature, and Art*

**Indian languages.** India has five or six distinct families of languages, of which the Indo-Aryan is but one. The Dravidian languages have been affected by Indo-Aryan but nevertheless are independent in structure. In recent times, the richness of the early literature of the Dravidians has been brought to light. However, we are concerned primarily with the speech and writings of the Indo-Aryans. When these fair-skinned tribes came through the northwest passes, they spoke a

variant language of the mother tongue of the Indo-European family which in its general features was more or less the same as the earliest Greek. The different tribes, however, spoke a variety of dialects. Within a thousand years of their arrival the Indo-Aryan language had evolved into the tongue known as Sanskrit. This language belongs to the same family as Persian, Greek, Latin, and English. The early Indo-Aryan speech became the mother of such languages of northern India as Marathi,

Hindi, and Bengali, all of which evolved over a period of centuries.

By the time of the rise of the Magadha empire in the fourth century B.C. Sanskrit existed in three forms: the strict Sanskrit of the Brahmins, who were interested in scriptural exactness, the language of the poets and court bards as found in the great epics, and the less literary Sanskrit, which was used in treatises on politics, law, and the arts. There is evidence in the *Rig-Veda* that even in Vedic times vernacular dialects which differed from Sanskrit were arising in various localities. Sanskrit has always been the language of the learned people. It is highly expressive and euphonious, a language most appropriate for literary expression.

**The Vedas.** Sanskrit literature is probably the oldest, the most diversified, and the most voluminous of all Indian literatures. Moreover, it is the most representative of Indian thought. The *Vedas*, from which our knowledge of primitive India is gleaned, were written in Sanskrit. The word *veda* means knowledge, and a *Veda* is really a compilation of knowledge regarding religion, philosophy, and magic. Of the four *Vedas* which have survived to present times, the oldest and most famous is the *Rig-Veda*. Consisting of 1028

hymns in praise of different gods, it is a peculiar combination of childlike questions such as why, for example, white milk should come from red cows, petitions to the gods for good crops or longer life, and (sometimes) religious concepts of deep beauty and sincerity.

The *Vedas* were considered too sacred to be revealed to a Sudra, or serf; hence they were not written down but were transmitted orally from father to son among the Brahmins. A Chinese traveler, visiting India in the late seventh century A.D., tells us that "in every generation there exist some intelligent Brahmins who can recite 100,000 verses."<sup>3</sup>

**The Upanishads.** After the poetic *Vedas* ceased to be composed, various prose treatises were produced, such as the *Brahmanas*, which dealt at great length with the doctrine of priestly rituals, and the famous *Upanishads*. The *Upanishads*, written about 800-600 B.C., are marked by an earnest sincerity of tone and are concerned with abstruse problems of Indian philosophy. The age in which they were written was filled with a growing distrust of the old Vedic religious concepts, and skepticism ran high. Men asked one another, "Whence are we born, where do we live, and whither do we go?" From their speculation arose a philosophy which moved Schopenhauer to say, "In the whole world there is no study so beneficial and so elevating as that of the *Upanishads*. It has been the solace of my life—it will be the solace of my death." A typical example of the style and contents of the *Upanishads* can be seen in a famous parable on the oneness of all life. A teacher is instructing a pupil:

"Bring hither a fig from there."

"Here it is, Sir."

"Divide it."

"It is divided, Sir."

"What do you see there?"

"These rather fine seeds, Sir."

"Of these please divide one."

"It is divided, Sir."

"What do you see there?"

"Nothing at all, Sir."

"Verily, my dear one, that finest essence which you do not perceive—verily from that finest essence this great tree thus arises. Believe me, my dear one, that which is the finest essence—this whole world has that as its soul. That is Reality. That is *Atman*. *Tat twam asi*—that art thou, Shwetaketu."<sup>4</sup>



Rival tribes lock in mortal combat in this rich manuscript illustration for the *Ramayana*. The poem has interested artists ever since Epic times.

**Epic poetry.** The literature of ancient India was not confined merely to priestly teachings. The great epic poems, the *Mahabharata* and the *Ramayana*, tell of heroic deeds of the early Indo-Aryans. They describe events from about 1000 to 500 B.C. The *Mahabharata*, like the Greek *Iliad*, deals with a great war and is undoubtedly the product of many poets who added fragments over a long period. In its present form the *Mahabharata* contains 107,000 octameter couplets and is seven times the length of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* together. The poem glorifies principally the Kshatriyan caste, as it deals with the bloody warfare between two Indo-Aryan tribes. But the main story is often interrupted by myths, long genealogies, love stories, lives of saintly persons, and discourses upon religion, duties of kings, caste regulations, and a thousand other topics.

Perhaps the jewel of this mighty epic is a philosophical poem called the *Bhagavadgita*, or Lord's Song. So sacred is the *Gita* to the Indians that it is used today in the law courts of the land for the administration of oaths, just as we make use of the Bible. The *Gita* is anonymous and may have been composed anywhere from 500 B.C. to 200 A.D. The high light of the poem is the battle between the two tribes, in which emerges the natural reluctance of the warrior Arjuna to fight his own relatives on the other side. Although Arjuna propounds the doctrine of nonresistance in his conversation with the god Krishna, the latter replies that Arjuna must first follow his duty as a member of the Kshatriya caste. And if death should accompany his actions, Arjuna can take comfort in the truth that the soul alone is eternal and imperishable.

The second epic, the *Ramayana*, is much shorter than the *Mahabharata*. It has been likened to the Greek *Odyssey* because it also tells of a hero's wanderings and his faithful wife's long vigil. Where the *Mahabharata* is a vigorous glorification of war and adventure, the *Ramayana* shows the growth of chivalric ideals among the Indo-Aryans. The chief

characters possess a flawless nobility. Compassion, gentleness, and generosity are much in evidence. Both epics have provided all subsequent Indian literature with untold numbers of stories, just as the Homeric poems have provided themes for countless western writers.

**Art.** The Indian nature is keenly appreciative of art. We have learned from the ruins at Mohenjo-Daro the excellent artistic endeavor that had been reached some three thousand years B.C. There is a gap in our knowledge of Indian art for a period of over 2000 years from Mohenjo-Daro's fall (about 2500 B.C.), but painting and sculpture undoubtedly flourished.

It is unfortunate that knowledge is also lacking regarding architecture from the time of Mohenjo-Daro to about 250 B.C. The buildings of the Indus valley culture were built of brick, while those of the Vedic and Epic Indo-Aryans seem to have been constructed of wood. Stone was not used until later. Decorative use was frequently made of the Buddhist symbols of the Wheel of Life and the lotus or water lily. The Wheel of Life was especially important because it symbolized the revolving of human souls in the great cycle of reincarnation. As long as men had to learn the lessons of this world, they were chained to the Wheel of Life, which circled from birth through life to death and back to birth again. The lotus and the lily are flowers always associated with the Buddha.

Painting was in evidence as far back as Neolithic times. Drawings of animals have been discovered in prehistoric caves. Again gaps occur in our knowledge, due largely to the corruptive influences of climate upon paints and the disruptive work of the idol-smashing Moslems in medieval times. A group of Buddhist frescoes found on the walls of a cave in central India is the first datable painting (about 100 B.C.). It is a pity that our appreciation of the early Indian arts has been limited by the incompleteness of our knowledge, but we can safely attribute to these people a high state of artistic expression and skill.

## Religion and Philosophy

**Influence of religion.** The power of religion is extraordinarily strong in India. Every aspect of Indian life has always had religious significance. It is commonly found in literature, art, economics, philosophy, sociology,

politics, or even science. This phenomenon perhaps accounts for the recent leadership in Indian national affairs of a man who is not a statesman but a religious figure—Mahatma Gandhi. We may expect, then, to dis-



cover two major facts: first, that the history of religion in India is long and complex and, second, that Indian religious thought has evolved ideas which are among the most novel and most intricately worked out in all the history of the human race.

**Religion in early India.** The vanished people of Mohenjo-Daro appear to have been members of the cult of the Mother Goddess, a religion common throughout the Near East. It was natural that early man should have soon realized that his existence depended upon the fertility of the earth. Therefore he came to look upon it as a great mother which nourished him and was forever creating fresh life.

When the Indo-Aryans swarmed into India long after the days of Mohenjo-Daro, they found the Dravidian inhabitants following an animistic and totemic worship. Good and bad spirits who dwelled in trees, stones, streams, and mountains had to be placated by magic spells and incantations to keep the worshiper safe. The Dravidians worshiped snakes, especially the cobra.

**Vedic religion.** Dravidian practices differed profoundly from those of the Indo-Aryans, who had brought with them into India their own religious theories. The Indo-Aryans worshiped the Devas, or Shining Ones, the gods who dwelled in the firmament. The most popular of all the gods was Indra, the Indian Thor, who wielded the thunderbolt and helped the Indo-Aryans against their Dravidian foes. Indra, the mighty warrior, was depicted as eating bulls by the hundreds and quaffing lakes of wine. The Vedic religion required no temples or images, but sacrificial rites, including the offering of *soma* juice and the pouring of liquid butter into the fire, were performed by the Brahmans. Vedic philosophy was not complicated. After death the human soul simply entered into eternal punishment or everlasting happiness. There was as yet no thought of reincarnation of the soul. However, in the later *Vedas* there grew slowly the idea that there is Something beyond the everyday acts of both gods and men, Something which underlies all life, a Moral Law which governs even the gods themselves. The *Vedas* demonstrate the evolution of early Indian religion and philosophy from a simple belief in many gods toward a deep pantheism, a conception of the entire universe and everything in it, as God. We have already pointed

out that the most famous of the *Vedas* is the *Rig-Veda*. And the loftiest of all the religious poems in the *Rig-Veda* is the oft-quoted "Creation Hymn." The Hymn tries to discover the beginning of universal life, even before the gods themselves were created. In reading the majestic lines we can perceive at once the pantheistic note that dominates the poem:

Nor Aught nor Naught existed; yon bright sky  
Was not, nor heaven's broad woof outstretched  
above.

What covered all? What sheltered? What concealed?

Was it the water's fathomless abyss?

There was not death—yet was there naught  
immortal;

There was no confine betwixt day and night;  
The only One breathed breathless by itself,  
Other than It there nothing since has been.  
Darkness there was, and all at first was veiled  
In gloom profound—an ocean without light—  
The germ that still lay covered in the husk  
Burst forth, one nature, from the fervent heat.  
Who knows the secret? Who proclaimed it  
here?

Whence, whence this manifold creation  
sprang?

The gods themselves came later into being—  
Who knows from whence this great creation  
sprang?

He from whom this great creation came,  
Whether His will created or was mute,  
The Most High Seer that is in highest heaven,  
He knows it—or perchance even He knows not.<sup>5</sup>

**The philosophy of the Upanishads.** By the time of the *Upanishads* (about 800-600 B.C.) the old Vedic religious beliefs had been largely discarded. Like their Greek kinsmen, the Indo-Aryans now interested themselves in cosmology (the attempt to find a rational explanation of the processes of the universe). While the *Upanishads* do not present a logically worked out system of thought (for they were composed over a period of centuries), the following main points, from which all subsequent Indian philosophy has developed, can be found:

(1) The one essence which permeates every aspect of the universe is an impersonal, immaterial, unborn and undying spirit or force called *Brahma*. It is the essence of all things, the "Real of the Real," the "World-stuff."

(2) There is a universal Soul of which all individual souls are an unbreakable and eter-

nal part; this Soul of all souls is called *Atman*.

(3) *Brahma* and *Atman* are one and indivisible. Therefore we as individual souls and God as the essence of all things are one. The unity of all life is the only reality. The *Upanishads* repeat over and over again the fundamental fact that no matter what we see about us, "That art thou."

(4) As individual souls living in a world of the senses, we think that each of us and the world itself must exist apart from the one all-pervading Soul or essence; but that belief is *maya*, or illusion. The world of the senses is transitory and exists only as part of the one unchanging *Brahma*. The illusion of separateness must be completely abandoned before we perceive the truth.

(5) While we are living in a state of illusion, we place our faith solely in those things which are transitory, and therefore their effect upon us is transitory and unsatisfying. Hence we are afflicted with sorrow and pain. We shall never be free from the world's sorrow until we achieve *moksha*—deliverance. *Moksha*, which comes through our awareness of the reality only of the one, eternal life, insures our re-absorption into the *Brahma*.

(6) Only through long experience can the individual soul learn the lesson of the illusion of separateness, a lesson which can never be learned except in the world of the senses. Therefore each soul must receive many experiences. Experiences are received only by the incarnation of the soul into many physical bodies. Thus the doctrine of *transmigration*, or *reincarnation*, is an essential feature of the *Upanishad* philosophy.

(7) The actions of all aspects of life are governed by an immutable, eternal moral law called *karma*. It can be roughly summed up as the law of action and reaction, or, as it is stated among Christians, "For whatsoever a man sows, that shall he reap." By *karma* the Indians explain the conditions of men. The environment into which a person is born, together with his attending fortune and misfortune, is due not to the whimsy of a capricious God but to the acts of the individual himself in past lives. The Indian says there is no favoritism in the universe but only immutable law and justice.

The philosophy of the *Upanishads* is still the basis of most Indian thought. The late Indian poet, Rabindranath Tagore, and the

famous leader of present-day India, Mahatma Gandhi, have both been indebted to the *Upanishads* for many of their beliefs. The *Upanishads* have had an effect outside India also. We noticed the praise which the nineteenth-century German philosopher Schopenhauer bestowed upon the ancient teachings. Several nineteenth-century Americans, among them Ralph Waldo Emerson, were likewise influenced by the *Upanishads*.

**Hinduism.** So far we have discussed the essentials of the philosophy of the *Upanishads*. Yet we read today about Hinduism and Buddhism. Where do these faiths fit into such a philosophy?

The *Upanishads* are the basis of both religions. Hinduism developed out of *Upanishad* philosophy, largely through the efforts of the Brahman caste. Hinduism grew for the reason that the people do not respond so readily to philosophy as they do to religion. Therefore, Hinduism, while accepting the *Upanishads*, has added certain features of its own. It gave the caste system a religious significance by linking it up with the theory of reincarnation. The Hindus maintain that each of the four major castes is for the purpose of learning unique experiences. Thus, the Sudra is only starting his cycle of human reincarnation and has many lessons to learn, whereas the Brahman is approaching the attainment of *moksha* and therefore will not have to be reincarnated in the world of the senses again.

To the philosophy of the *Upanishads* Hinduism has also added ceremonies and rituals. Further, Hinduism is polytheistic; that is, it worships many gods. The three most important deities are *Brahma* the Creator, *Vishnu* the Preserver, and *Shiva* the Destroyer. The Hindu worships this trinity because he sees everywhere in life three great processes: creation, preservation, and destruction. The common people divide their popular devotion between *Vishnu* and *Shiva*, and festivals are annually held in honor of each. Superstition early entered Hinduism, and because that faith teaches the sacredness of all life, deities were made of such creatures as cobras, crocodiles, and parrots. The cow is held in special veneration by the Hindus because of her gentleness and rich gift of milk. Today seventy per cent of India's population is Hindu.

**Modern Hindu customs.** After having examined the more important religious and so-

cial beliefs of ancient India, we can apply them to our own understanding of that land today, because these concepts have persisted with amazing vitality down to present times. The Hindu looks upon all living things as part of the one Life. Therefore nothing must be slain, whether it be man, cow, or even poisonous snake. Similarly, because of his attitude toward the taking of life, the conscientious Hindu eats no meat of any kind. The strictness of his diet is also accounted for by his belief that the physical body has a direct bearing upon the spiritual life and that therefore to degrade his body with impure food is to impair his soul's purity.

We can now see, too, the religious significance of the caste system. The devout Hindu believes firmly that the caste idea is of divine origin. According to a man's actions in his past life, he is assigned to an appropriate caste where he has to work out duties to him-

self and his caste which help his spiritual nature unfold. These codes of duty are attributed to the legendary Law of Manu (Manu was considered by Hindus the father of mankind) and cover such matters as government, economics, domestic life, morality, diet, travel, and caste eugenics. Whereas in Vedic times caste was largely of racial significance, in medieval and modern times it became a matter of religious importance. And it is the religious aspect which has kept the caste system all-powerful up to present times. The priestly Brahman today still maintains his supremacy in Hindu religious and social life and feels that his soul has been defiled if he comes in contact with even the shadow of a pariah, or outcaste. And because the present group of 40,000,000 outcasts, "untouchables," are religiously taboo, the British government has the thankless job of trying to fit them into a social system in which caste has allowed them no part.

### *Gautama Buddha*

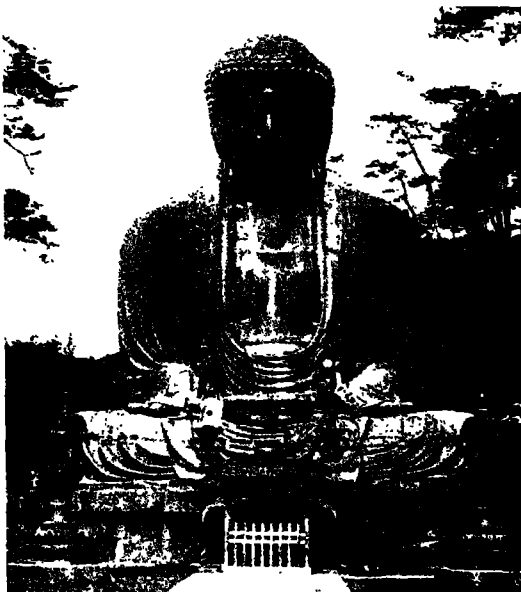
**Brahman dogma.** The *Upanishads* had developed a philosophy which stressed the necessity of individual effort to win freedom from the illusion of the physical world. We remember that, from Vedic times on, the reli-

gious rites were in the hands of the Brahmans. While they had worked out the philosophy of the *Upanishads*, nevertheless they continued to keep their hold over the people by stressing the necessity of religious ceremonies and costly sacrifices. Salvation was to be won not so much by individual effort as by accepting wholeheartedly the dogmas of the Brahman priestcraft. The more profound minds of the day saw the discrepancy clearly and revolted against the system.

Likewise, as we have noticed, the *Upanishads* came to be written largely out of the growing disbelief in the older Vedic gods and theology. India stood in need of religious reform so that the beliefs of the people would be more in keeping with the ideals and spirit of the *Upanishads*.

**The life of the Buddha.** The great religious reformer who now appeared was Gautama Buddha (563?-483 B.C.). He stands out in history as one of the profoundest influences in the life of mankind. This influence is due to two principal factors: the beauty and simplicity of his own life and the philosophical depth and ethical nobility of his teaching.

Gautama was born about 563 B.C., the son of the king of Kapilavastu, at the foot of the Himalayas. He led a happy life as a youth and received training both in arms and in

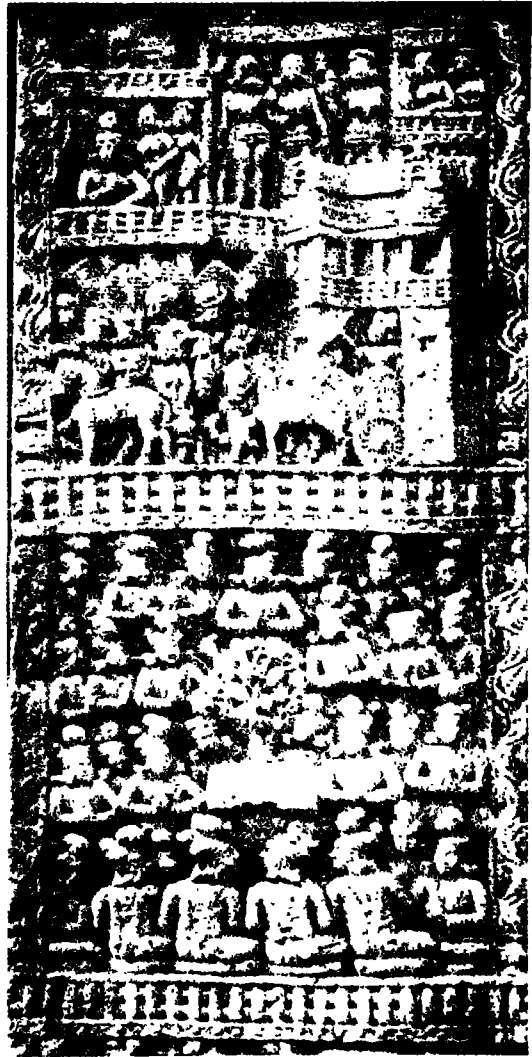


*Though Gautama forbade the practice of idolatry, numberless statues like the giant Buddha at Kamakura, Japan, were later erected to him throughout the east.*

philosophy. He married his beautiful cousin and had a son. But according to tradition, Gautama one day became profoundly aware of the misery, pain, disease, and sorrow that he saw as he walked through the streets of the city, and the sight of death moved him to speculate about its cause. Palace life offered him no solution, and the very happiness which he had found in his wife and son only made the world's suffering more unbearable by contrast. He determined to leave everything and seek in the world for an answer to his problem. With pious joy the devout Buddhist recounts the tale of the Great Renunciation, the forsaking of pleasure by the young prince and his departure from the palace in a simple yellow robe. For seven years he dwelled in the forest, practicing the self-mortification rites of the yogis whom he found there. Yogis are men who follow the practice of yoga, a philosophy having as its object union with the Supreme Spirit. To accomplish such a union, the yogi leads an ascetic life, gaining mastery over his body through the strictest discipline and purity of action and meditating constantly so that he may realize, consciously and completely, his unity with all that lives.

Gautama nearly died from his yoga fastings and self-tortures, and he came at last to the conclusion that these practices never lead to wisdom. He was meditating on the problem of human suffering beneath a large tree when he received "enlightenment." From it he was able to construct a religious philosophy which has affected the lives of literally thousands of millions for nearly twenty-five hundred years. Soon he had attracted disciples, of whom the Buddha's most beloved was the faithful Ananda, who occupies the same position in Buddhist stories as the disciple John in the New Testament. Dressed always in his simple yellow robe, with begging bowl in hand, the Buddha, the "Enlightened One," wandered through the plains of the Ganges, constantly preaching to the villagers who flocked to hear him in the shade of evening. He spoke with everyone, irrespective of caste, and, like Jesus, who congregated with sinners and publicans instead of the "respectable" Pharisees, he would decline the sumptuous banquets of nobles to partake of the simple hospitality of peasants and even social outcasts.

**Death of the Buddha.** At last, when eighty years old and worn out by his constant travels



*Scenes from the life of Buddha are depicted on pillars of the great stupa at Sanchi, India, which was carved around 100 B.C.*

and labor, the Buddha was invited by a poor smith to a meal. The food was tainted, but Gautama ate it rather than offend his host, although he forbade his disciples to follow his example. Later in the day the Buddha was taken with severe pains, and he knew death to be near. Calling his disciples together, he bade them, "Be ye lamps unto yourselves. Be a refuge to yourselves. Hold fast to the truth as to a lamp. Look not for refuge to anyone beside yourselves." The legend tells us that at that point the faithful Ananda could not restrain himself but went aside and burst into

tears. The master gently reproved him, saying, "Enough, Ananda! Do not let yourself be troubled; do not weep! Have I not already, on former occasions, told you that it is in the very nature of all things most near and dear unto us, that we must divide ourselves from them, leave them, sever ourselves from them? Whatever is born must be dissolved." After telling his disciples to inform the poor smith that he should not reproach himself for the food, the Buddha addressed the group: "Behold now, brethren, I exhort you saying, 'Decay is inherent in all component things! Work out your salvation with diligence!' This was the last word of the Blessed One."<sup>6</sup>

**Buddhist teachings.** What is the teaching of the Buddha? Briefly stated, it consists of the Four Noble Truths and the Noble Eightfold Path (which is the fourth Truth):

1. The presence of Sorrow in the world
2. The cause of Sorrow
3. The removal of Sorrow
4. The path leading to the removal of Sorrow:

Right Understanding  
Right Resolve  
Right Speech  
Right Action  
Right Living  
Right Effort  
Right Mindfulness  
Right Meditation

In addition to the above teachings, the Buddha set forth certain moral rules: not to kill, not to steal, not to speak falsely, not to be unchaste, not to drink intoxicating drinks, and not to be angry.

A close relationship existed between Buddhist and *Upanishad* philosophy. In the last analysis the Buddha was simply rephrasing *Upanishad* teachings in order to make them more understandable to the common people. Furthermore he wanted to strip the ancient beliefs of the encumbrances and superstitions which had grown up around them as a result of the practices of the Brahmans. He had no use for the caste system but said that whether a man is born a Brahman or a Sudra has no bearing on his spiritual stature. Only by living the philosophy can a man win deliverance from *Maya*. Buddhism started out as a philosophy rather than a religion. The Buddha was not interested in rituals or ceremonies or priestly mediators. He did not even state that there is

a God but placed his trust in the "law that makes for righteousness." Therefore Buddhism has no trinity like Hinduism. In the Eightfold Path he gave the people a practical code of ethics by which they could more easily be delivered from sorrow.

The Buddha, like the writers of the *Upanishads*, believed that sorrow and suffering come from attachment to the physical world, the world of illusion. As long as the individual puts his faith in transitory things, he is attached to the Wheel of Birth and Rebirth. Reincarnation is a necessity in the Buddhist doctrine, for only by repeated lives of suffering in this world can the individual finally learn the secret of escape. And what is the secret? It is the realization that the world is transitory and a spiritual illusion. Once this realization is reached, the path by which sorrow is removed then opens to the seeker. The strict rules of the Eightfold Path will lead one away from the cycle of rebirth and make possible a reabsorption into the Universal Life, "the slipping of the dewdrop into the Silent Sea," the entry into *nirvana*. *Nirvana* does not mean annihilation of individual fragments of the universal soul but only annihilation of the illusion of separateness by which we think that we live independently of the One Life. Buddhists liken the soul in *nirvana* to a violinist who has become a member of a symphony orchestra: He is still a violinist in every sense of the word, but he is now also a member of a group which makes use of his contribution to achieve an effect of sound which he by himself could never attain.

There has been much dispute regarding Buddhist philosophy. It has been condemned as being entirely pessimistic, since its teacher looked upon the world as evil and taught always the doctrine of sorrow. However, while it is true that the Buddha maintained that the world is only illusory, he did it to show that there is a greater life which exists outside and beyond it, which can be attained by every individual. Again, he was realistic enough to admit that there are pain and suffering everywhere in life, but his teaching was not the glorification of sorrow but its removal. We can think of the Buddha as a reformer of Hinduism: He fought against the rites and dogmas of the Brahmans, broke the iron-bound rules of caste, considered all men equal, and demanded that the purity of the philo-

ophy of the *Upanishads* be maintained. He gave the world a code of morals and ethics fully as high as that to be found in any other religion, while his doctrine of the middle path of action shunned fanaticism and extremism of all kinds. It was the reasonableness and gentleness which later made Buddhism so acceptable to the Chinese.

**The nature of later Buddhism.** The history of Buddha's teachings after his death is a sad one. The very evils against which the Buddha

fought crept into his own religion. He demanded that each man work out his own destiny and forbade the worship of gods, yet it was not long before men were praying to him as a god who could give them salvation. Nor was it long before the antagonistic Brahmans attacked Buddhism so savagely that they finally drove it completely out of India. One now looks for the followers of Gautama in Burma, Ceylon, Tibet, China, and Japan. He has been disowned by the land of his birth.

### Summary

During the formative period in India occurred the foundation of Indus valley civilization, the gradual infiltration of the Indo-Aryans through Hindustan, and the rise of certain highly important institutions. The philosophy and religion of modern India were developed in the *Vedas* and *Upanishads*. Likewise, the all-important caste system with its religious, social, and economic ramifications was gradually elaborated. Buddhism not only gave India and the world new philosophical concepts but later became the great religion of the common people in Ceylon, Tibet, Burma, China, and Japan. Sanskrit developed as the rich literary language of poets who wondered at the ways of the gods and the universe in the *Vedas* and sang the praises of Indo-Aryan warriors in magnificent epics, the *Mahabharata* and the *Ramayana*. Music, painting, sculpture, and architecture progressed during pre-Buddhistic history, as did agriculture and the crafts of the rising cities. Indian social life was thus well rounded and progressive in its pattern.

If we accept the definition that civilization is that stage of life in which society becomes sedentary, creates towns and cities, and so orders its life that its people are made safer and happier, then we can state with positive proof that the Indians not only created a civilization but created one that was flourishing and advanced. The Indo-Aryans ceased their nomadic existence, settled upon the lands that fell to them as conquerors, and built innumerable villages and cities there. From the Dravidians they gained many cultural advantages. These, added to their own heritage, made Indo-Aryan civilization at once unique and enduring. They made definite political advances. Their government evolved from a tribal existence to established political units. They sang rude songs which gradually assumed artistic form and became mighty epics. They used their hands to fashion beautiful sculptured objects and their minds to fashion even more impressive philosophical concepts. Flocks and herds fattened; lands became more extensive and fertile. They expanded eastward until all Hindustan was theirs, and the day was to come when all India also would be their possession.

## ANCIENT CHINA: PALEOLITHIC TIMES TO 249 B.C.

c. 10000 B.C.	Early Paleolithic Culture	<i>Sinanthropus pekinensis</i>
c. 6000 B.C.	Late Neolithic Culture	Yang Shao pottery
c. 3000-2205	Age of Political Fables Western peoples enter Wei River valley Expansion along Hwang Ho valley	Bronze Age Improvements in agriculture Animals domesticated Weaving; dyeing
2205-1766	Hsia: First traditional dynasty Kingdom divided into 9 provinces Territory is extended to Gobi Desert	
1766-1122	Shang: Creator of later Chinese culture Authentic Chinese history begins Type of feudalism develops	Advanced techniques in bronze work Pentatonic musical system Earliest script extant
1122-249	Chou: The longest of Chinese dynasties Period of expansion of Chinese power Government: Feudal monarchy Local government units finally usurp power by 8th century Development of Chinese institutions	Peasant proprietorship Village government Guild life in towns Civil service Code of manners
	Growth of art	Jade art Bronze sacrificial jars Birth of important ceramic art
	Written language assumes definite form	China's oldest poetry: the <i>Shih Ching</i>
	Period of greatest philosophers	Lao-tse, 7th century Confucius, 551-478 Mencius, 372-289

## CHAPTER 4

# *The Wei and the Hwang Ho*



THE twentieth century has not been kind to China. She has had to endure internal revolution and external humiliation. The culture impacts she has received from the west and from her westernized neighbor across the Yellow Sea have been harsh and all too often destructive. China has been fighting for her very existence as a sovereign state. The vast empire which for thousands of years ruled an area as large and populous as Europe has stood in grave danger of being split into weak, puppet states under the domination of a vigorous people whom the Chinese in former times sneeringly called dwarfs. No matter what may be the final verdict of the present conflict, China has apparently broken with the isolation which she enjoyed in the past, an isolation which was created largely by her geographical situation and fostered by an indigenous culture so rich that it prompted the Chinese to look upon the outside world as barbarian. While the west has much to offer China in science, medicine, and engineering, China has her own rich culture of yesterday from which to draw in abundance. How accurately we can estimate the extent to which she will accept western ideas, yet keep her splendid heritage, depends upon an examination of the history of the Chinese people.

This history is surely worth examining for its own sake. We in the west are obsessed with the belief that we have so much to do and so little time in which to do it that our very hurriedness often keeps us from creating objects or institutions which are permanent. The Chinese are quite different. They have been spending untold centuries in refining the art of living and creating institutions which will endure. True enough, they have a conservatism which we often find galling, but they possess a poise



which we envy. The history of China explains the temperament of the people, their reasonableness, urbanity, realism, good nature, and apathy toward change. Likewise it explains the splendid cultural contributions which the Chinese have made during an unbroken period of some three thousand years. Theirs was an art which never tried to be pretentious and awe-inspiring but sought to be exquisite and natural, a literature which succeeded in being restrained and concise, a philosophy which never attempted to explain God or the universe but only tried to show men how to live normally and contentedly. Likewise their science was characteristically practical and progressive. They made advances in sericulture so that the raising of silkworms would give them more beautiful clothes, found out about tea so they could enjoy a pleasant beverage and then created the world's finest porcelains in which to drink it, invented paper and block printing in order to multiply the learning which they so dearly love, discovered the value of the magnetic compass so they might travel more safely from one place to another, invented folding fans to keep themselves cool in summer and umbrellas to keep themselves dry in winter, and finally hit upon gunpowder, which, because they pride themselves upon being reasonable people, they used for fireworks in celebrations and not for war.

### *Geography and Racial History*

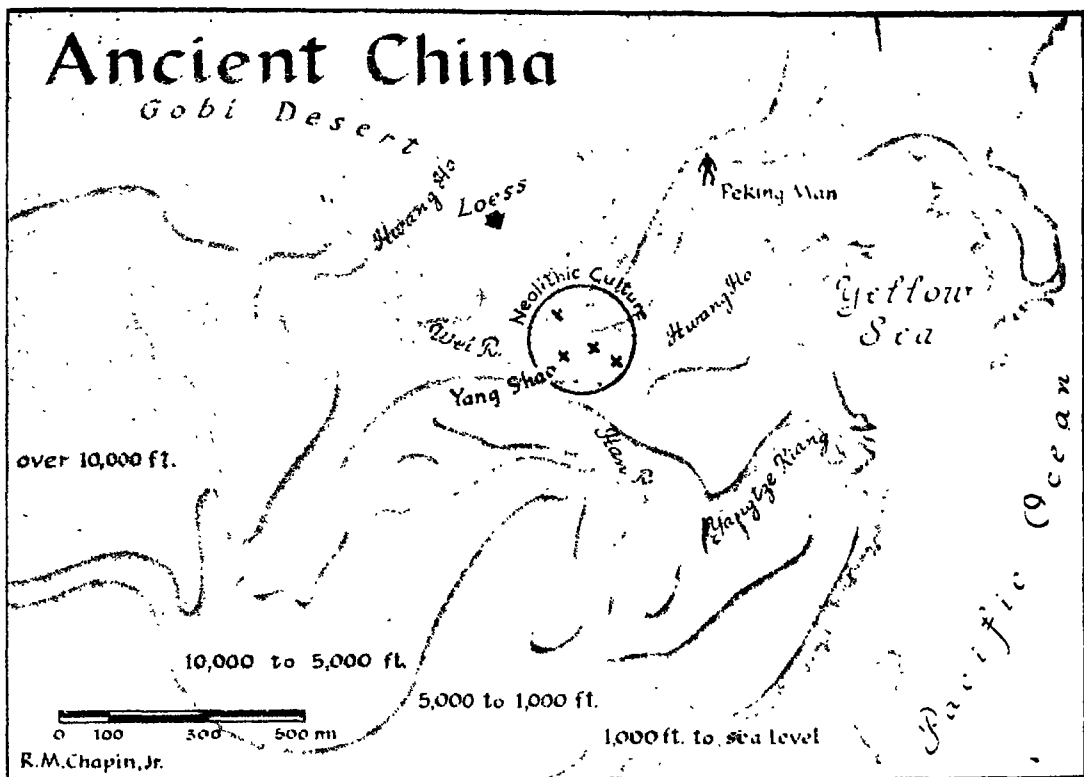
**Geography of China.** We have seen the importance of geography in Indian civilization. In China too the physical features of the land are inseparably linked with the civilization of the people. This huge country has a total area of over 4,000,000 square miles (larger than that of the United States), while its population, estimated in excess of 400,000,000, is three times as great as ours. On the east China is bounded by the Pacific Ocean, whose expanse made attack from that direction well-nigh impossible until modern times. On the west, northwest, and southwest great mountain chains, vast desert stretches, and semiarid plateaus isolate and protect the middle regions.

There is a difference of thirty-five degrees in China's latitudes, ensuring a variety of climate. The south is subtropical, with monsoons and typhoons, while the north experiences extremes of heat and cold. There is a corresponding variety of vegetation, aided by the natural fertility of great sections of the country. The north possesses the loess, a loam which was perhaps built up of dust carried by winds eastward from the plains of central Asia. It is exceedingly fertile. The central and northeast areas contain a large alluvial plain formed by deposits from the muddy waters of the Yangtze and Hwang Ho, in which agriculture flourishes.

China proper (roughly the area of the map on the opposite page) comprises three major regions: the valley of the Hwang Ho, the Yangtze valley, and southern China. Through the first region flows the sluggish Hwang Ho, depositing great amounts of silt so that the bottom of the river is sometimes higher than the surrounding land, necessitating the use of dikes to keep the water in the proper channel. In times of flood the river may break through the dikes, sweeping away crops and farms and destroying untold numbers of lives. With good reason the Chinese have termed the Hwang Ho "China's Sorrow."

Farther south is the valley of the Yangtze Kiang, one of the greatest rivers in the world. Thirty-two hundred miles in length, it allows ocean-going vessels up its channel for six hundred miles, while smaller steamships can travel upstream still another nine hundred miles. The Yangtze valley today contains many large cities. The fertile soil and reliable rainfall produce an abundance of crops. Southern China is very mountainous and contains large numbers of non-Chinese people. This region is rich in mineral resources and citrous products. Through its important seaports extensive commerce with foreign merchants is carried on.

China proper is the home of Chinese civilization. The oldest culture center lay in the



valleys of the Hwang Ho and its tributary, the Wei. Like Egypt, Mesopotamia, and India, China first developed a fluvial civilization. Water was at once the cheapest and most efficient means of transportation and communication. The major rivers have many tributaries which act as waterways. China is even today largely fluvial in its civilization. It has been quite easy to unite China proper politically, racially, economically, and culturally, because the presence of so many important rivers has made communication a relatively simple matter. It was natural that this land of rich agriculture, varied natural scenery, and splendid vegetation should be termed by the poetic Chinese people *Chung-Hua Min-Kuo*, "The People's Kingdom of the Middle Flower."

**Origins of the Chinese people.** We know that the population of China is not homogeneous. The flag of the Republic, adopted in 1912 and used till 1928, has five horizontal stripes representing the five principal "races" that inhabit the land: the red stripe for the Chinese, the yellow for the Manchus, the blue

for the Mongols, the white for the Turks, the black for the Tibetans. And in the outlying regions is a multitude of other races and tribes. No one knows definitely whether in very early times primitive peoples migrated to China from other regions or whether the Chinese are an indigenous group. Among theories advanced by scholars are these: (1) The Chinese from time immemorial have occupied the valleys of the Hwang Ho and Wei. Chinese annals make no mention of outside migrations. (2) The Chinese came originally from southern regions, perhaps from Burma, for the most ancient ideographs of the Chinese indicate a tropical climate, and the oldest sounds in the Chinese language are found in southern China. (3) The Chinese migrated from central Asia, where the race originated, and appear to have a faint racial and cultural affinity with the Mesopotamian Sumerians.

Within the last few years archaeology has played an important role in unraveling the mystery of Chinese origins. In 1929 Peking Man, *Sinanthropus Pekinensis* (see Chapter 1, page 10), was found in a cave by paleontol-

ogists working under the direction of J. G. Andersson. Peking Man appears to be about the same age as *Pithecanthropus erectus*. One scholar maintains that it is perfectly plausible to assume that *Sinanthropus* is a direct ancestor of modern man, for the conformation of jaw and teeth indicates a direct genetic relationship between *Sinanthropus* and the present Mongolian race. The significance of the assumption is enormous, for it would imply that ancestors of the modern Chinese may have been living in China since early Pleistocene times, though perhaps not continuously.

**Early culture.** Peking Man represents an early Paleolithic culture, while other skeletons found in an adjoining cave show that China also possessed a late Old Stone Age culture. We do not know yet whether China was inhabited during the early and middle Neolithic periods, but we have absolute knowledge of late Neolithic remains. J. G. Andersson has explored many sites and made important discoveries in the village of Yang Shao in the Hwang Ho valley.

Neolithic culture in northern China can be divided into three successive types. The first was analogous to Neolithic culture elsewhere. The people hunted, fished, developed agriculture, made tools and weapons (polished stone axes and knives). The next period is that of painted pottery. Because its type site is Yang Shao, it is known as the Yang Shao culture. Here were created many beautiful specimens of vigorous design and striking color motifs in red, black, and white. The third Neolithic culture is marked by the disappearance of painted ware and the presence of a black-pottery culture. The black-pottery people had towns surrounded by walls of pounded earth and possessed the ox and the horse. Their culture was similar to advanced Neolithic cultures elsewhere. ~~Andersson states that conti-~~

nuity exists between certain techniques of Neolithic culture and those of modern times. For example, iron knives used today in north China in cultivating sorghum are shaped exactly like some Neolithic knives which have been found.<sup>1</sup>

There was a Bronze Age in China which Andersson places in the third millennium B.C., a date which agrees generally with Chinese tradition. The technique of casting bronze may have come from the west originally, but the Chinese themselves became most proficient in the use of the metal. By the time of the Shang dynasty in the second millennium B.C., the Chinese people had developed an extremely advanced bronze technique. Interesting bronze food and sacrificial vessels in tripods and other forms were cast (see illustration, page 95).

**Summary.** Our present knowledge of Chinese racial and social origins is scanty and subject to change quickly with the latest archaeological discoveries. But we can say that China possessed Paleolithic, Neolithic, and Bronze Age cultures. Furthermore, it seems probable that Chinese culture has a continuity of many thousands of years. But while continuous in sweep and virile in character, it is certainly not homogeneous. Early Chinese art is proof of the heterogeneity of Chinese culture. The Neolithic pottery found in the Hwang Ho valley is in many respects identical with that fashioned in Mesopotamia and Turkestan. Also, the present Chinese "Mongolian" is by no means a homogeneous race. It may be that inhabitants of north China from Neolithic times to the present belong to a single racial type. However, the primitive stock has been modified by invasions from Mongolia, central Asia, and elsewhere. The present Chinese are therefore a fusion of peoples of diverse origins, customs, and languages all of whom contribute to what we call Chinese civilization.

### *From Fables to Facts (about 3000 B.C.—249 B.C.)*

**Early fables.** China is the historian's paradise, for there the historian has always been honored and his works prized. For this reason China has the most nearly complete historical records left by any civilization. When, however, we push back the centuries far enough, we come to accounts which are no longer history but mythology. The Chinese are like all other people in this respect, for it

is human nature to explain the mysterious past supernaturally rather than naturally. But whereas the Greeks and the Indo-Aryans wrote epic poetry in their attempts to glorify their ancestors, the Chinese created historical romances in prose. Their accounts are fascinating if not factual.

Fabulous as these stories are, they have, from the historical viewpoint, a certain importance.

They show that the Chinese, unlike many other peoples, did not believe that they sprang from some mighty heritage. Because they wrote of humble beginnings, the Chinese evidently believed in an evolutionary development of their civilization.<sup>2</sup>

**The Wei River people.** We now come to the borderland between fable and fact. According to more than one scholar, about 3000 B.C. immigrants from the west began to settle in the valley of the Wei River near its confluence with the great Hwang Ho. These people had already developed many of the arts of civilization mentioned in Chinese mythology. They had already domesticated flocks and herds of animals, built dwellings, tilled the soil, and knew enough about government to create an organized state in their new home in the river valley. They intermarried with the more primitive inhabitants of the regions, steadily grew in power, and expanded along the Hwang Ho valley.

**Legends of the period.** The period from 3000 to 2205 B.C., the beginning of China's first dynasty (according to legend), was one in which advances were made in agriculture, silk-worm breeding, and fishing. Some of the rulers used picture symbols in writing, and worshiped Shang-ti, the Supreme Being.

According to tradition, the first Chinese dynasty was the Hsia ("civilized"), which endured from 2205 to 1766 B.C. Its first ruler was supposed to have been Yü, about whom the Chinese historians always spoke in lavish terms. Yü was credited with having controlled the floods of nine rivers by cutting through nine mountains and creating nine lakes; the grateful Chinese maintain, "But for Yü we should all have been fishes." As an administrator he divided his kingdom into nine provinces, extended his territory westward to "the moving sand" (Gobi Desert), and finally subdued aboriginal tribes in the south.

Yü's eighteen successors in the Hsia dynasty followed a course typical in Chinese dynastic history. A dynasty begins with a model emperor whose virtue gives him the heavenly mandate to rule, but continues with emperors who lack virtue. Finally the dynasty degenerates to the point where, according to Chinese belief, it no longer holds the mandate of heaven and ought to be extinguished. The usurper who is successful in overthrowing the outworn dynasty is believed to hold the new

mandate of heaven and so is entitled to rule and to create his own dynasty. The prestige of the Hsia dynasty certainly waned steadily after the death of Yü. At last the cruelty and excesses of one emperor exhausted the patience of the people. A revolutionary hero called T'ang, the lord of Shang, led the rebellion, captured and banished the tyrant, and set himself on the throne.

**The Shang dynasty.** T'ang founded a new dynasty, the Shang, which endured from 1766 to 1122 B.C. Archaeological evidence proves that the Shang dynasty had a real existence. Shang culture was the direct ancestor of the later Chinese culture. Its people were a Bronze Age people possessing highly developed techniques. The earliest remaining script dates from the Shang period, although it may have been invented centuries earlier.

Emperor T'ang ruled only twelve years. He appears to have been a just and able monarch, but the Shang followed the same path of decadence as their predecessors. Wu Yi was an atheist who is supposed to have blasphemed the spirit of heaven. "He played chess with it and told a man to make its moves. When the spirit of heaven lost, he derided and insulted it; and making for it a leathern bag, he filled it with blood, hung it up in the air, and shot arrows at it."<sup>3</sup> For this, according to the shocked historians, Wu Yi was struck dead by lightning. The excesses of another emperor proved the last straw. Not caring to endure further such novel tortures as balancing on greased poles over a pit of burning charcoal, the people at last rebelled under the leadership of the chief of the western state of Chou. The rebels were victorious, the emperor committed suicide, and the Chou dynasty came into power. The longest-lived dynasty in China's history, it extended nearly nine centuries, from 1122 to 249 B.C.

The establishment of the Chou 周 marks the final evolution from political fables to facts. But before we continue with developments under the Chous, let us summarize the culture changes of the formative centuries (3000-1122 B.C.).

**Early Chinese culture.** The *Canon of History*, a collection of documents edited by Confucius, contains legends and history beginning as far back as the twenty-fourth century B.C. By that time the Chinese had advanced far beyond a primitive Stone Age culture. They were

engaged in agriculture in the twenty-eighth century B.C. (according to Chinese tradition) and had a minister of agriculture in the twenty-third century. The *Canon of History* also informs us that they were acquainted with the use of gold, silver, copper, mercury, and lead at that time. By the twenty-second century B.C. the Chinese were using the horse and other domestic animals. Not only were people engaged in agriculture and mining during the period of the first two dynasties, but they had made progress in raising silkworms, in weaving silk and linen, and in dyeing, and they also worked in ivory, bronze, and basketry. They drove carts drawn by horses and used chariots in warfare.

As early as the reign of Shun (traditionally twenty-third century B.C.) there was apparently a well-organized government. The emperor was served by a nobility of five classes corresponding approximately to the later aristocracy of Europe—duke, marquis, earl, viscount, and baron. Affairs of state were handled by a premier and a cabinet of six ministers, one each for religion, agriculture, public works, justice, communication, and education. There were also bureaus concerned with forestry, music, and astronomy. The last-mentioned bureau not only had to calculate eclipses but had to signify the astrological effects of all stellar phenomena. Law and order were regulated by a penal code, one which was severe (like all ancient codes) and used five forms of punishment for serious crimes: "branding on the forehead, cutting off the nose, cutting off the feet, castration, and death."<sup>4</sup>

Under the Shang dynasty a kind of feudalism developed. Outlying sections of the empire became semi-independent under the rule of dukes and princes. These nobles continued to acknowledge the supremacy of the emperor while directing local affairs themselves.

During the formative centuries the Chinese created a written language which has persisted without many radical alterations to the present. In consequence it is the oldest form of writing now used in the world. For the training of future servants of state they established schools in which scholars not only had to learn to read and write the characters of the Chinese language but also received instruction in the work of the particular department they were to enter. Scholars were also taught court ritual and ethical principles.

The religion of early China consisted of the worship of a Supreme God, called Shang-ti, and the lesser spirits of heaven, the worship of the earth and its attending spirits, and the worship of man through the spirits of his ancestors. The sun and the stars were also given reverence for their effect upon the earth and its inhabitants. Worship involved ritual, which in turn involved sacred dancing and music. Thus those arts received much stimulus; music especially was in high favor. Eight kinds of instruments which were evolved during the Hsia and Shang periods are still in use, including drums, cymbals, musical stones, bells, wind and stringed instruments, and the rattle. The musical system was pentatonic (five-toned) and was highly mathematical in its principles. However, despite the mathematical precision of Chinese music, many western ears fail to appreciate the subtlety of its harmonies when they hear the shrill sounds that emanate from a group of Chinese musicians.

*The Chou dynasty (1122-249 B.C.).* The house of Chou lasted for eight hundred sixty-six years and was perhaps the most important dynasty in all of China's history. As we shall soon see, it was the period when the Chinese perfected certain institutions which have persisted down to present times. Likewise it was the age in which lived China's most illustrious philosophers, thinkers who have indelibly left upon Chinese civilization the impress of their ethical and moral teachings. It was also a period of great geographical expansion.

The state of Chou, one of the semi-independent states mentioned earlier, was originally an outlying region located on the northwest frontier of the Shang kingdom. By the twelfth century B.C. it had become the most prosperous state in the kingdom. When the Chou rulers came to the throne, their rule extended only over the Wei and Hwang Ho valleys, although Chinese culture had been radiating outward from there. By the end of the Chous' rule, their power extended nominally over the greater portion of China proper.

With expansion, however, came definite political changes. The first of the Chou kings rewarded his faithful followers by making them nobles and assigning them territories. It has been estimated that 1773 new principalities were created. The new states became less dependent upon the central authority with the

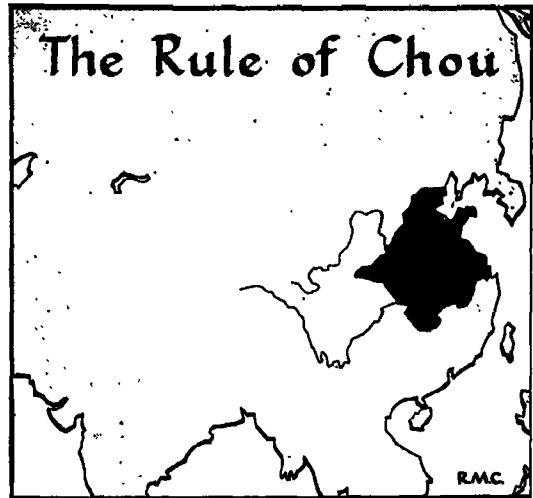
passing of time. By the eighth century B.C. the emperors had lost nearly all control over the principalities, which for some five hundred years fought intermittent wars with one another. As time went on, the smaller states were absorbed by more powerful neighbors so that in the sixth century B.C. there were approximately fifty-two states, while by 249 B.C. the powerful state of Ch'in had succeeded in reestablishing a unified empire.

**Life under the Chous.** Many Chinese institutions crystallized during the rule of the Chou dynasty. The people who lived at that time have been described as "the children of the Yellow Earth" because their civilization was nurtured in the rich loam. Life was primarily agricultural. The land belonged to the state but was used by the feudal lord primarily for his own benefit and not for the peasant who tilled the soil. Toward the end of the dynasty, however, peasant proprietorship was spreading.

There was little freedom for the ordinary man, since the state divided all the common people into set categories and prescribed for each person his occupation. There were nine such categories: farmers, gardeners, woodmen, herdsmen, artisans, merchants, women weavers of silk and linen, servants, and unskilled laborers. Industry and labor were strictly supervised by the government. Fishing and the mining of salt were state monopolies, and the government had the privilege of conscripting labor for public works and the army. State revenues came not only from control of monopolies but also from the exacting of one tenth of the land's produce, from the renting of ships, for which rolls of cloth were paid by the merchants, and from the taxing of market sales, imports, and exports.

While in theory the Chou rulers were absolute, in practice, as we have seen, the feudal lords of the many states into which the empire had been divided were almost independent of the royal rule, so that the privileges we have just enumerated were somewhat limited in actuality. China was really a confederacy during the Chou period. Not until later did she become a single centralized state.

**The ruler.** During the Chou period the king was called the Son of Heaven, a title retained by later rulers. In theory at least, he was the supreme lord and alone bore the title of *Wang*—King. The feudal princes and lords all owed him homage and had to pay him



tribute. The Son of Heaven would receive them at his court with a strict ritual which was designed to impress upon them their natural inferiority. His recognition alone could make legitimate the title of a lord or the existence of a new state. In earlier times the king could actually deprive nobles of their position, but during later Chou times the powerful territorial princes often defied their feudal ruler. The Son of Heaven, like the pharaoh of Egypt, exercised not only political jurisdiction but also definite religious powers. He alone could act as the great mediator between heaven and earth. He performed the sacred rights of heaven and earth with lavish ceremony, so that a proper harmony might exist between the spirit of heaven and the spirit of earth, the fertility of the soil might be assured, and the four seasons continue to bless China.

**Family and village groups.** Chinese society was grouped not only according to occupations but also along lines of kinship. The strongest social unit, then as now, was the family. Family group life was undoubtedly encouraged by the problem of farming the fertile but unstable soil, which is subject to sudden and swift erosion and needs large groups to cope with it. "There is a proverb in the loess country that farming is good if one can keep track of the farm."<sup>6</sup> Families lived in villages deriving their names from the group that had founded them, and went forth from their villages to till the fields. There are no statistics regarding the average size of the land holdings or the yield of grain per acre, but the Confucian

*Book of Poetry* has left us this splendid picture of typical farming life during Chou times:

They clear away the grass and the bushes;  
And the ground is laid open by their plows.  
In thousands of pairs they remove the roots,  
Some in the low wet lands, some along the dykes.

There are the master and his eldest son;  
His younger sons, and all their children;  
Their strong workmen and the helpers.  
How the noise of their eating the viands brought to them resounds!

(The husbands) think lovingly of their wives  
(who have brought them food).

(The wives) keep close to their husbands.  
Then with their sharp plowshares  
They set to work on the south-lying acres.  
They sow their different kinds of grain,  
Each seed containing in it a germ of life.  
In unbroken lines rise the blades,  
And well-nourished the stalks grow long.  
Luxuriant looks the young grain,  
And the weeders go among it in multitudes.  
Then come the reapers in crowds,  
And the grain is piled up in the fields,  
Myriads and hundreds of thousands and millions (of stacks);

For liquor and for sweet liquor,  
To offer to our ancestors, male and female,  
And to provide for all ceremonies.  
Fragrant is their aroma,  
Enhancing the glory of the state.  
Like pepper is their smell,  
To give comfort to the aged.  
It is not only here that there is this abundance;  
It is not only now there is such a time—  
From of old it has been thus.<sup>a</sup>

As time elapsed, the village community came to include members who were not related by blood to the original family group. Thus the village became an artificial unit held together as a political entity. The leaders of the new group were chosen by common assent instead of along kinship lines. This plan still exists.

**Town and guild.** Meanwhile certain trading areas were developing into towns, and society here had to evolve beyond the family pattern. As a result the guild relationship arose. The guild system was the grouping of craftsmen and merchants into associations according to the type of industry or commerce in which they engaged. Thus the goldsmiths had their separate guild, the butchers theirs,

and so on. As in medieval Europe, the heads of the guilds became the heads of town government. Each guild attempted to look after the financial and social interests of its members and at the same time maintain a proper standard of workmanship. A merchant or artisan had apprentices working for him, and he undertook certain personal as well as business responsibilities regarding his assistants. By about 600 B.C., industry had become specialized along these craft lines, while trade was divided into mercantile associations.

**Trade and industry.** Trade and industry undoubtedly flourished during Chou times. Could we have walked down the narrow streets of a city of the age, we should have seen hovels of beaten earth with doors of wickerwork and roofs of thatch. Merchants sold beautiful linen and silks newly off the river boat from downstream. Tailors in their shops made brocaded gowns for the rich. Furriers worked over costumes for those who could afford to buy caps and coats made of deer skin with linings of sheep and lamb skin. Leather-workers fashioned gaiters, and jewelers and their assistants carefully cut exquisite jades and made earrings or highly ornamented ivory combs and pins for the coiffures of noble ladies.

Furniture played an important role in making the abodes of the rich comfortable and luxurious. Skilled craftsmen made screens of embroidered silk and curtained couches. Tile-workers were needed to make the floors, wood carvers to design beautiful panels for the lower portions of home partitions, and carpenters to smooth and polish the great beams and rafters. Other craftsmen devoted their talents to the making of chopsticks and bamboo or earthenware dishes. Kitchen utensils of pottery and iron occupied the efforts of still more skilled laborers, while one guild of workers devoted its attention to the creation of bronze vessels. The streets of the city would be filled with farmers bringing in their rice to market or driving their swine and poultry down the thoroughfare to the butcher's shop, where a nobleman's cook could buy the choicest cuts.

**The civil service.** The Chou dynasty was the formative period of a unique Chinese ruling class, the civil service. It was made up largely of an aristocracy of scholars and was the administrative body midway between the heads of the villages and guilds and the central ruler himself. The civil service rose from the

custom of the king's asking various clans and families to send some intelligent member of their group to help in the royal government. As time went on, the number of scholars from each district came to be proportional to the population.

This bureaucracy was based on two of China's most prized ideals, education and conduct. Never was its rule hereditary. A member of the lowest peasant stock might become even a chief minister provided he could pass the stiff educational examinations and knew the intricacies of China's strict code of social conduct. The successful candidate, however, although chosen by a democratic merit system, assumed the attitudes of the social and intellectual aristocracy, so that there was always a wide gulf between him and the common people.

**Feudal and common law.** Law codes were promulgated by various feudal states, much to the anger of the people, with whose ancient customs and common law the codes often conflicted. Furthermore, the new laws generally favored the aristocracy at the expense of the peasantry. But as with most other problems in China, code versus custom achieved a compromise. The former was limited to national problems while the latter continued to keep its ancient jurisdiction in local matters.

**Custom and fashion in ancient China.** In feudal court circles there developed that strict code of manners which we mentioned in connection with officialdom. The code became so important to the nobility as a symbol of gentle breeding and so complex in its ramifications that the nobles devoted years to its mastery. The status of women was evidently high; the literature of the Chou dynasty indicates the relatively great freedom which they enjoyed. The history of China, in fact, is replete with incidents where a woman wielded even royal power. More than one gifted or calculating woman, perhaps a beautiful concubine, would in actuality rule the empire from her boudoir, while some of the most dynamic leaders were dowager-empresses.

Marriage, then as now, was arranged by the parents of the youth and the girl, but often the choice was disregarded by either the man or woman. Marriage was solemnized by the worship of heaven and earth and the groom's ancestors. Before their shrines the couple plighted their troth and drank fermented

liquor from a melon split in halves, a custom indicating that they had thus sealed their sacred vows.<sup>7</sup> As a rule, a man might have but one wife, though in much earlier times polygamy may have been common. However, a husband was permitted to possess concubines. Often the bride of a young noble would take along as a gift for her husband a younger sister and perhaps a cousin. Naturally trouble brewed from such an arrangement, especially when the concubine was prettier or more talented than the wife. Hence the reason for the ancient proverb among the Chinese, a people of much experience and deep understanding, "Where there is great beauty, there is great wickedness!" It was the wife, nevertheless, who was the mistress of the household and who worshiped the ancestral spirits with her husband. It was likewise the rule that her oldest son should be the heir.

Life was becoming increasingly refined and luxurious among the wealthy classes, while poverty among the peasants and unskilled laborers was prevalent. The houses of the poor were hovels of earth and thatched roofs, whereas the abodes of the rich were constructed of brick with tiled roofs and laid out in groups of buildings separated by courts and gardens. Floors were made of tiles and covered with mats which consisted of three qualities according to the materials from which they were woven: rushes, grass, and bamboo splints edged with black and white silk. There were no chairs or tables in existence during the early Chou period, but there were couches and hard pillows made of horn, bamboo, or pottery. Heating was provided by braziers of charcoal.

Food was served in dishes which might be made of bamboo, bronze, or earthenware and was eaten with chopsticks sometimes fashioned of ivory. The food itself differed radically according to the difference of palate or purse. The peasants raised swine and poultry and lived largely on millet in the north and rice in the south. The rich had sumptuous banquets involving the "five flavors," the sweet and sour, the salty and spicy, and the bitter. Liquor, in China as elsewhere, has always been popular among all classes, and moralists of the day lamented the over-indulgence of the population, although drunkenness is by no means common in China.

The costume of the period was not unlike that worn in the Manchu dynasty of a later



period. Over a long gown a shorter coat was worn, and the gown was buttoned on the right side. In fact, Confucius praised one statesman by saying, "But for Kuan Chung we should now be wearing our hair disheveled, and the lappets of our coats buttoning on the left side"<sup>8</sup> (foreigners buttoned their clothes in that way). Materials were linen and silk, and the poor protected themselves against winter by bundling themselves in quilted clothes, as

they do today, while the rich used furs. Ornaments of gold and jade and precious stones decorated women's ears and fingers, and some ladies of the seventh century B.C. wore wigs.

Many of our present-day amusements were to be found among the leisure occupations of Chou courtiers. They would while away their time playing chess, perfecting their horsemanship, hunting, training horses and dogs, gambling on dice and cockfights, and fencing.

### *Early Art and Literature*

**C**haracteristics of Chinese art. The Chinese have a deep-rooted love of nature which affects their artistic expression to a marked degree. Not only do they possess a sensitivity to beauty which demands that the most common household utensils be esthetically acceptable, but they insist that their arts be completely appropriate. Their buildings are dignified and sober yet are marked by a rhythm of line that fits in with the trees among which they are carefully situated. The landscapes are depicted on scrolls with a technique which, through relatively few simple lines, suggests tremendous feeling and insight. The psychological richness of Chinese painting comes from the practice of Chinese artists of spending whole months in contemplating and meditating upon some natural scene which they love. The Chinese arts are in

general marked by restraint and a sense of poise. These qualities probably come from their attitude of conservatism and serenity. A poem, for example, seldom gushes but in a line or two quietly sums up the most poignant human emotions, such as those of a woman who has lost her soldier husband:

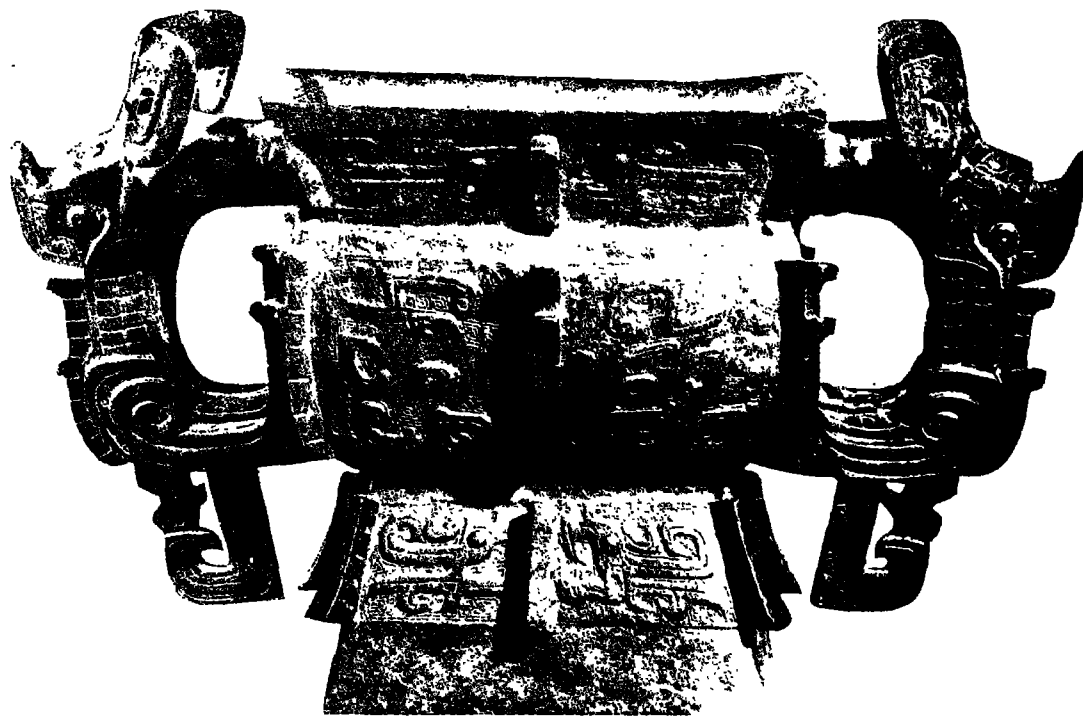
By building a dam one may stop the flow of the Yellow River,

But who can assuage the grief of her heart when it snows, and the north wind blows?

**Jade art.** We associate jade with China, and rightly so, for jade ornaments have been found in the earliest Chinese graves. Perhaps as early as 2500 B.C. the Chinese were cutting jade into forms of fishes as "sound-stones" which, when struck, could emit an exceedingly clear sound for a considerable length of time. Early jade



*With these jade symbols the emperors of the Chou period worshiped heaven and earth. The jade disk, called "pi," was blue-green in color and represented heaven. The jade tube, yellow in color, symbolized the earth; it was called "ts'ung." In later times the jade pieces, though retaining their symbolical significance, came to have a more decorative nature.*



BRONZE CEREMONIAL VESSEL OF THE SHANG DYNASTY

work was stimulated by religious uses, and the symbolism of the amulets found in graves has prompted much speculation as to the precise meaning of these artistic masterpieces.

The ancient Chinese considered jade the most precious of stones, so sacred and so imbued with the spirit of virtue that it should be used only in the fashioning of ritualistic objects. The Son of Heaven used to give his lords jade tokens as a symbol that he recognized them, because, as we recall, the king was at once a political and a religious leader, and his ceremonies always possessed religious significance. Jade was cut into shapes of a symbolic nature, pertaining to heaven, earth, and the four points of the compass.<sup>9</sup>

**Bronze art.** By about the second millennium B.C. beautiful ceremonial bronzes were being fashioned and continued to be made for the next 1500 years. Bronzes have been discovered which go back to the Shang dynasty; the earliest precisely dated pieces come from the Chou period. The illustration above shows one of these early vessels, decorated with characteristic interlacing motifs which emphasize its angularity. Many Shang bronzes are huge

sacrificial jars with mythological decorations, and libation cups, used by the ruler in the rites of heaven and earth and more commonly by each Chinese family in ancestor worship.

**Ceramics.** Unquestionably the Chinese take first place among all peoples in the art of ceramics. We shall see that it attained its most perfect forms in later dynasties, but during the early, formative centuries the Chinese were already skillful technicians and sensitive artists. Where we in the west look on china as of value mainly for its household utility, the Chinese combined in pottery both utility and the highest expression of beauty. That Chinese pottery is very ancient can be realized by recalling our discussion of Neolithic times in China, when beautiful red and black pieces were created by skilled artists at least five thousand years ago. Other pieces have been found which have been ascribed to the Shang dynasty, but we have to wait for the productive Han dynasty (206 B.C.-220 A.D.) before we find Chinese pottery again assuming artistic proportions.

**Architecture.** There are several arts of which we have little evidence from the Chou period.

One is architecture. It was never considered a major art in China, as it always has been in the west. One type of building, characterized by an overhanging, steep-pitched roof and upturned corners, was made to serve secular and religious, public and private purposes. Because the building material was principally wood, there are today no examples remaining from the earliest periods.

**Painting and sculpture.** Painting has been called the most characteristic art of China, because it embodies the Chinese spirit of restraint and poise. More can be said about the rich contributions of Chinese painting to world art when we examine later periods. Unfortunately no examples survive of the earliest Chinese painting. But literature tells us that it was an established and skilled art centuries before the birth of Christ. According to tradition, a sister of Emperor Shun was the first Chinese painter. Even of Chou painting we have no remnants, but Confucius speaks of certain temple frescoes and of the strong effect they had on him.

Sculpture is yet another art which did not become important until the Han dynasty. Legend tells of the huge bronze statues cast before this time, but (if they existed) they were probably melted up by later dynasties for making coins.

**Language.** The Chinese language is monosyllabic. Difference in meaning is achieved through the use of tones, of which there are from four to nine for each word sound. The written language is composed of about 40,000 characters, each of which expresses a distinct idea. Whereas the spoken language of China has split into a hundred dialects so that a Cantonese usually cannot understand a man from the north, the written language has remained comparatively unchanged. Under the Chou dynasty it took on the form which it possesses (with some modifications) today. There has probably been more change in English since the days of Chaucer in the fourteenth century than there has been in written Chinese during the two thousand and more years since Chou times.

Chinese is noted for its terseness and brevity and, at the same time, for its subtlety and complexity. Its long, changeless continuity has its advantages, for it means that a literate Chinese living today can read the literature which was written twenty centuries ago, even

though he would be totally at a loss to say how the characters he is reading were formerly pronounced. The Chinese script and pictures symbolize in some ways the character of China's civilization. Despite all changes and departures they remain constant, conservative, and continuous.

**Poetry.** During China's formative centuries literature flourished richly. Unfortunately, most poetry written prior to the age of Confucius has been lost, but three hundred five poems have been preserved in the *Shih Ching*, or *Book of Odes*. The odes vary in age from those of the Shang dynasty a thousand years prior to Confucius down to those of his own day. From the *Shih Ching* we gather unmistakably that human nature has changed little, that the problems of war, famine, disease, and solitude, together with the joys of love and domestic life, affected the ancient Chinese in just the same fashion as they affect us. In our own age of war we can sympathize deeply with soldiers engaged in a conflict which they did not create:

How free are the wild geese on their wings,  
And the rest they find on the bushy Yu trees!  
But we, ceaseless toilers in the king's services,  
Cannot even plant our millet and rice.

What will our parents have to rely on?  
O thou distant and azure Heaven!  
When shall all this end? . . .  
What leaves have not turned purple?  
What man is not torn from his wife?  
Mercy be on us soldiers:—  
Are we not also men?<sup>10</sup>

And here is a love poem which is timeless in spirit and typically Chinese in its restraint and tenderness of expression:

The morning glory climbs above my head,  
Pale flowers of white and purple, blue and red.  
I am disquieted.

Down in the withered grasses something  
stirred;  
I thought it was his footfall that I heard.  
Then a grasshopper chirred.

I climbed the hill just as the new moon  
showed,  
I saw him coming on the southern road,  
My heart lays down its load.<sup>11</sup>



*A Sung dynasty artist produced in bronze this beaming portrait of Lao-tse, sitting comfortably atop a water buffalo. The figure, a statuette, belongs to a period much later than the supposed lifetime of the little philosopher.*

### *Early Philosophy*

**Major philosophical interests.** Chinese philosophy has stressed the importance of man as an individual and a member of society. Unlike the Indians, the Chinese are not overly interested in the mysteries of a divine plan and its deities. And unlike the early Greeks, they have never wholeheartedly troubled themselves with the nature of the universe. Rather they have concerned themselves primarily with the problems of man as an individual, how he may act rationally both as a private citizen and as a member of the state, how he may establish the most satisfactory code of morals and ethics, and how he may best pursue happiness. In the Chou period we find the fruition of Chinese philosophy. The rulers of

ancient China have become mere names on the pages of history, but the teachings of Confucius, Lao-tse, and Mencius are world-renowned. Truly, "the captains and the kings depart," but the great philosophers, artists, and scientists endure, for they are permanent benefactors of the human race.

During the fifth and sixth centuries B.C. the political situation was highly unstable. China was split up into scores of warring feudal states. Men asked themselves how an end might be put to discord and war, and teachers arose who offered solutions for current problems. These individuals proved popular, and they founded schools of thought which attracted many students. The political situation

needed to be set right, and they bent their efforts to working out a rational solution. It was not the form of political organization which troubled the Chinese philosophers (as was the case with other peoples, such as the Greeks). The ancient Chinese accepted monarchy as natural. The problem to them was the creation of moral principles which should instill in men and monarchs the highest expressions of virtue and benevolence at all times.

**Lao-tse.** Little is known about the life of Lao-tse. In fact some critics have even questioned whether he lived at all. However, he is supposed to have been an older contemporary of Confucius, born about 604 B.C. According to a Chinese historian, Lao-tse was the curator of the Royal Library of Chou. Toward the end of his life, Lao-tse left his post with the intention of retiring into solitude. At the frontier of the Chou country he was asked by an interested official to write down the gist of his beliefs. This Lao-tse did in a book of five thousand words, known to posterity as the *Tao Te King*, the *Book of the Way and of Virtue*. Over both the authorship and age of the volume scholars are still wrangling. Some maintain heatedly that it could not have been written earlier than 240 B.C. But the contents of the *Tao Te King* command our attention, since they represent a school of thought which profoundly influenced China.

**Taoism.** The word *Tao* means the Way, the way of nature and renunciation of the world. The Taoists rebelled against the evils of political disorder and moral decadence which they saw about them in contemporary feudal society. The way out of danger lay, they believed, in renouncing organized society and retiring to a contemplation of nature and her rhythm and eternal laws. Taoism is really a philosophical anarchism. Like Rousseau in eighteenth-century France, who preached the necessity of returning to a primitive, natural life, the Taoists maintained that the less people are governed, the better off they are. Laws are created by intellectuals, yet laws do not stop crime. Why? Because the secrets of the universe are not to be gained through the mind. They are gained only through an intuitive contemplation of the vast, silent, ceaseless flow of nature in every atom of life. The sage is he who does not cram his mind with facts but learns to appreciate the laws of

nature and to submit to them. The Taoists tell us:

"All things in nature work silently. They come into being and possess nothing. They fulfill their function and make no claim. All things alike do their work, and then we see them subside. When they have reached their bloom, each returns to its origin. Returning to their origin means rest, or fulfillment of destiny. This reversion is an eternal law. To know that law is wisdom."<sup>12</sup>

From this passage one can see that the Taoists believe that everything in life is transitory. In their insistence on the need to understand the vital impulse of nature which creates a constant evolution we catch a foreshadowing of the philosophy of Bergson and other twentieth-century thinkers. Taoism is a revolt against the intellect's limitations and the evils of society. Nature and the contemplative life will alone give men peace and understanding. A later Taoist, Chuang-tzu, even questioned the reality of the world of the senses, as we learn from his anecdote of the butterfly:

"Once Chuang-tzu dreamed that he was a butterfly, flying about enjoying itself. It did not know that it was Chuang-tzu. Suddenly he awoke, and veritably was Chuang-tzu again. I do not know whether it was Chuang-tzu dreaming that he was a butterfly, or whether now I am a butterfly dreaming that I am Chuang-tzu."<sup>13</sup>

When Taoism and Chinese art are studied together, one is at once struck by their similarity of attitude. Both shy away from the baldly realistic aspects of life. Neither one places much trust in an intellectualized interpretation of nature. On the contrary, both are deeply introspective and intuitive. The Chinese artist is a Taoist at heart. He wanders off alone to some quiet grove where there is a view of a waterfall with forested peaks beyond. Instead of painting at once, as the western artist might do, the eastern painter is more likely to contemplate the scene, musing upon its beauty and letting the serenity of the landscape sift into his feelings. Then he will return home to paint his picture. The result is not an exact replica of what he has seen; rather it is an impressionistic reaction to what he has felt. The Chinese artist and the Taoist philosopher alike seek to understand the processes of nature that created the landscape; the landscape in itself is not all-important.

**Confucius.** The most famous and influential of all Chinese philosophers was Confucius, a descendant of the Shang kings who had ruled in northern China a thousand years earlier. He was born in 551 B.C. in what is now called the province of Shantung. He became skilled in archery and music as a boy, appears to have been married at nineteen, divorced at twenty-three, and then to have remained single—and a philosopher—the rest of his long life. Confucius was by all accounts as homely in appearance according to Chinese standards as was Socrates to his Greek friends. The story is told that once he was separated from his disciples while traveling; they found him, however, when a stranger told them he had seen a “monstrous-looking” man with “the disconsolate appearance of a stray dog.” Confucius laughed heartily when the description was repeated to him.

At twenty-two he began to teach at home, giving to his few pupils an education worth far more than the small fees he charged. His fame as a teacher began to spread, and hundreds of youths came to him to be taught history, philosophy, poetry, and manners. He was finally called to public life, being made chief magistrate of a small town in southern China. Legend tells us that dishonesty ceased entirely under his government, as it also ceased when he was appointed minister of crime by a certain duke. Unfortunately the duke came under the spell of “sing-song” girls of whom Confucius disapproved. Thereupon the sage set out on his travels, which proved long and arduous. Confucius was not called back to his old post until another duke had mounted the throne. The sage spent his last five years living a life of honor and simplicity. He died at the age of seventy-two.

**Confucius' scholarship.** Confucius was not only a great philosopher but an accomplished scholar. There are six classics which tradition credits him with editing: the *Canon of History*, the *Book of Poetry*, the *Book of Changes*, the *Spring and Autumn Annals*, the *Record of Rites*, and the *Record of Music*. While modern scholars assign to Confucius a much smaller share in the books than does tradition, the classics certainly embody the Confucian spirit and philosophy and have influenced all subsequent Chinese thought.

We have already discussed the *Canon of History* (page 89) and the *Book of Poetry* or *Odes*



*Proverbially ugly, Confucius gazes good-naturedly from this silk painting (from a later period).*

(page 96). The *Book of Changes* was an ancient volume of oracles used for divination and philosophy. The *Spring and Autumn Annals* contains the principal events in Confucius' native state. The *Record of Rites* shows the nature of the ritualistic teachings of his school, which were designed to condition character and sanctify ancient traditions and mores. The *Record of Music* was a part of the latter work and comprised treatises on the theory of music and its effects. Modern students who are told that jazz and twentieth-century music symbolize the degeneracy of music will be gratified to learn that Confucius frequently laments the fact that the lascivious airs of his contemporaries are supplanting the serious music of the ancients.<sup>14</sup>

Confucius was a staunch traditionalist. He protested against the political disunity and the moral laxness of his age, as did the Taoists. But where the former looked to a renunciation of the sinful world altogether as the solution, Confucius maintained that the remedy lay in going back to the “good old days” of primitive Chinese society. In his time people believed that there had once existed an age of perfect virtue because of the wonderful rule

of superior kings. The acts of the ancient sages still could be examined because they were to be found in the *Canon of History*. Therefore the vices of Confucius' age might be clearly seen and corrected.

**Confucius' teachings.** Confucius' teachings are concerned with ethics almost entirely. According to him, human society depends upon the natural sympathy of man for his neighbor. This sympathy first expresses itself in a man's own family circle, then radiates out to his group of friends, his neighbors, and finally to all men. The goal is the achievement of the highest good for society, to be attained through a correct definition of names. What is meant by this? First of all, Confucius maintained that the name of a thing is no empty word but is associated with a definite meaning. Secondly, every name embodies a definite field of duty, and a person deserves the name given to him only if he fulfills those duties connected with the word. "Only when the father is really a father and the son really a son are these names correctly applied, and only then may these individuals really enjoy the rights implied in these names."<sup>15</sup> Finally, if each person in society fulfills the duties corresponding to his well-defined name, we shall have a well-defined and well-regulated society.

The question now arises as to what shall decide the standard of duties. Here Confucius went back to the model rulers, the legendary Yao and his successor Shun, and took their standards as his authority. The early historians described Yao as "gifted without being proud, and exalted without being insolent," and he allowed any man, no matter how poor or humble, the right to make known to the king his grievance. Shun was credited with such reforms as standardizing weights and measures, improving the calendar, and reducing the thickness of the birch rods used in schools to persuade small scholars effectively. Each was a model ruler who emphasized the sanctity of the family group and the obligations of all members of society. That is why Confucius and all China to the twentieth century have revered the traditions of antiquity and why Confucianism is so conservative and unyielding.

The sage taught that proper education would bring out the natural sympathy and good will which are latent in all men. Piety and sincerity were keynotes to be stressed in

his educational scheme, and the result would be the higher man:

"The higher man has nine things which are subjects with him of thoughtful consideration. In regard to the use of his eyes he is anxious to see clearly. . . . In regard to his countenance he is anxious that it should be benign. In regard to his demeanor he is anxious that it should be respectful. In regard to his speech he is anxious that it should be sincere. In regard to his doing of business he is anxious that it should be reverently careful. In regard to what he doubts about, he is anxious to question others. When he is angry he thinks of the difficulties his anger may involve him in. When he sees gain he thinks of righteousness."<sup>16</sup>

Confucius, like Buddha, looked upon himself as a reformer of religious and social abuses rather than as a religious prophet. Yet just as Buddha was later glorified into a prophet, so Confucius was elevated to that exalted position. The transformation took place in 195 B.C. under the Han dynasty when an emperor paid a visit to the tomb of Confucius and offered there a sacrifice to the sage's spirit. The innovation began the national cult of the worship of Confucius, and his philosophy of ethics was twisted into a dogmatic, tradition-bound religion, with more emphasis on faith than on reason.

**Influence of Confucius.** Much more could be said about Confucius. He had an abounding sense of justice and moderation and felt compassionate toward others. While he could not get princes to agree to his political views during his life, his teachings exerted a mighty influence on the later history of China. For centuries his texts were the subject matter in the official schools, his conservatism and reverence for the past were inculcated into the national temperament, and his high code of morality permeated Chinese thought.

Unfortunately Confucianism has proved the undoing of China also. It has kept the country from making swift changes in modern times when swift changes were essential. It has often made Chinese thinking sterile, because scholars have had to rehash ancient Confucian texts instead of embarking upon original ideas. It has been a tool in the hands of rulers who used its reverence for organized authority to advance their own interests at the expense of those of the people. But though Confucius

and his teachings have proved a curse as well as a blessing for China, let us not judge the sage harshly. According to his lights he was correct in emphasizing traditions and obligations in an age when society had lost its political and moral bearings and needed to be anchored down again. Furthermore, the real trouble began when men turned Confucianism into a religion which could not be reinterpreted to suit the needs of a changing China.

**Mencius (372-289 B.C.).** Another Chinese philosopher of the Chou dynasty was Meng Tzu or, as his name has been Latinized, Mencius. His doctrine was as down-to-earth and non-mystical as that of Confucius. Interested in formulating canons of good government, Mencius was extremely democratic. He taught

that man is by nature good and that the evil in society arises from bad government. Like Plato he stressed the desirability of the state being administered by kings who were also philosophers. Mencius pointed out that governments have as their prime duty the welfare of the people. He denounced wars abroad and poverty at home and advocated universal education as the finest means of ensuring good government and an intelligent populace. He shocked existing rulers by bravely declaring that the common man should be looked on as the nation's most valuable asset, and, like Thomas Jefferson two thousand years afterward, Mencius stated that the people had the right to rebel and depose their kings if their welfare was not considered.

### *Summary*

Beginning as a fluvial civilization, diversified climate and fertile soil made China primarily a country of agriculture and peasant farmers. The individuality of Chinese culture came in great measure from the comparative geographical exclusiveness of the country. We do not know anything definite concerning the origin of the Chinese people, although it seems probable that they are a fusion of indigenous and migratory groups who accepted or developed the culture we speak of as Chinese. However, it is certain that human life has existed in China for an extremely long time, perhaps since the early Pleistocene era. Probably almost all China proper possessed a Neolithic civilization, while Paleolithic implements have been found near the Hwang Ho and in Inner Mongolia. The Chinese Bronze Age existed by the third millennium B.C., and people living under the Shang dynasty (1766-1122 B.C.) were definitely a Bronze Age people with advanced techniques.

The early history of China is lost in the mists of legend and fable. The Hsia dynasty cannot be dismissed as mere myth, however. The Shang dynasty certainly existed and strongly affected later Chinese culture. The Chou rulers constituted the longest reigning, and perhaps the most important, dynasty in all Chinese history, since theirs was the age when the nation's customs, art, literature, and philosophy received their present characteristics. Among the social institutions which were developed during these centuries were the village pattern of government, the town guild system, and the bureaucracy, or civil service.

Chinese art can be appreciated best if one remembers that it strives to depict the creative essence of life and hence is relatively more subjective, abstract, and mystical than most western art. We must reserve for another chapter the highest achievements in ceramics, painting, and sculpture, but even during the formative centuries China's artists wrought beautiful ornaments and vessels in jade, bronze, and pottery. Chinese literature also contains the same subjective spirit which we find in the country's art.

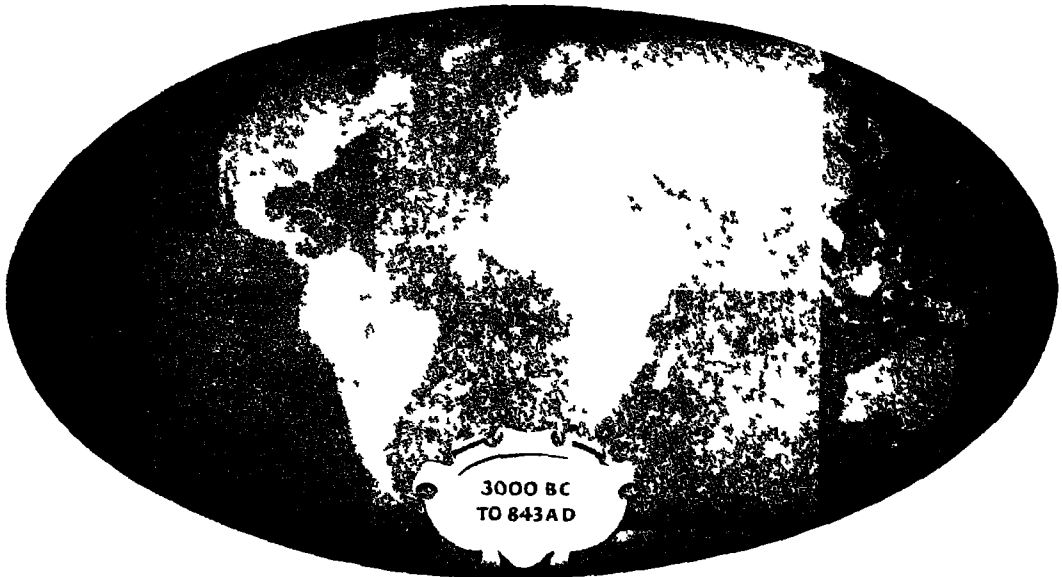
The glory of the Chou dynasty was its roster of great philosophers. While the



Indians created metaphysical systems which explained the workings of the gods and of nature, the Chinese sought only a means of showing men how to live rational and ethical lives here on earth. The ideas of Lao-tse, Confucius, Mencius, and the many other philosophers of the day have exerted an important influence upon Chinese culture for more than two thousand years. In fact, their influence has in modern times often proved more of a curse than a blessing, since it has kept many of China's intellectuals in the bondage of tradition at a time when they might have been grappling with modern problems and using modern ideas.

The common people of course, were not concerned with the abstruse points of the ethics of Confucius and Mencius. They satisfied their consciences by fulfilling their traditional religious rites. They knew and approved of the sacred rites of heaven and earth, which the ruler performed on behalf of the country and its inhabitants. Of a more personal nature was the family ceremony of offering tribute at the ancestral hearth to the spirits of the family dead.

The rich enjoyed most of the good things of life while the poor in dirt hovels had to be content with the scraps. Like the Indians, too, the Chinese were fettered with traditionalism during this early period, a condition that was to be aggravated more and more as time elapsed. However, unlike the Indians, the early Chinese were not cursed with too burdensome a class stratification. It is true that society was divided into categories, but in China there was not the addition of religious taboos in the form of caste regulations to keep a person from ever daring to rise above his birth. On the contrary the system by which officials were chosen for office actually made it possible for the humble peasant's son to become the most influential person in all the empire.



PART TWO

*Around the Mediterranean*

CHAPTER 5

*The City-States of Greece*

CHAPTER 6

*Pax Romana*

CHAPTER 7

*Interval in the West*

## AROUND THE MEDITERRANEAN

**T**HE FIRST PHASE in the evolution of civilization was almost unbelievably long. It took about one million years to bridge the gap between the earliest of men, *Pithecanthropus erectus*, with his slouching gait and almost complete lack of artifacts, to the first modern man, the Cro-Magnon type, with his cave art, his fire making, and such effective weapons as the harpoon and the spear. Following the immensely long initial period, the tempo of progress picked up, and in less than five thousand years man added more refinements to his way of living than he had during the preceding one million years. This period, so short when compared with its predecessor, extended from about 5000 B.C. to 250 B.C.

During that time, as we have seen, India developed her caste system, originated her philosophy of reincarnation and Karma, wrote her *Vedas* and great epic poems such as the *Mahabharata*, and gave Gautama Buddha to the world. China loomed out of the mist of legendary history in the twelfth century B.C., when the notable Chou dynasty commenced its rule of nearly nine centuries. The period is one of the most important in the history of China, for in those years the basic characteristics of her government, art, and philosophy were established.

In the Near East, from 5000 to 250 B.C., civilization after civilization rose and fell. Egyptians, Sumerians, Babylonians, Assyrians, Hebrews, and Persians, all had their period of glory, brief or long. Out of the medley of many civilizations came numerous enrichments to our culture. From this area Europe got its alphabet, its temple architecture, its first great literature, and the rudiments of science. But having made these contributions, the Near East for the moment lost its creativeness, for there was too much emphasis upon conformity. The autocracy of kings and the despotism of priests sterilized the seed of cultural creativeness. Invention and progress could not flourish in such an atmosphere. For the next period of important cultural advance in the western world the scene shifts from the Near East to the Mediterranean area.

**T**HE NEW PHASE in the history of civilization was mainly the achievement of two peoples, the Greeks and the Romans, and covered about two thousand years—from 1200 B.C. to 800 A.D. The civilization developed by the two peoples is often referred to as classical, for its literature and philosophy, indeed its thought in general, became and remained for hundreds of years the “classic” studies in the schools and universities of the western world.

The ancient Greeks created a striking civilization, fertile in artistic and intellectual achievement. They should not be given all the credit for their remarkable accomplishment, however, for many of their basic ideas were borrowed from the Near East. These ideas hopped and skipped to Greece over the stepping stones of the Mediterranean, the many small islands in the Aegean Sea. On their way they halted for a time to help build a great civilization on the island of Crete, usually referred to as Aegean civilization.

While Aegean culture was at its height in Crete, northern invaders entered what we now know as the Greek peninsula and succeeded in conquering it and the many nearby islands by 1200 B.C. The Greeks, blending with the Aegean peoples and adopting their culture, soon proved to be brilliant innovators in art, government, and thought.

While the Greeks were developing their impressive civilization, a new power was beginning to make itself felt in Italy—Rome. Settling on the banks of the Tiber as early as 1000 B.C., the inhabitants of Rome, the Latins, for five hundred years made little stir in history. But about 500 B.C. they embarked on a career of conquest and imposed the Pax Romana, or Peace of Rome, on the entire Mediterranean area.

The Roman epoch in Mediterranean civilization spanned the period from 146 B.C., the date of the final conquest of Greece by Rome, to 476 A.D., which marks the collapse of Roman power in the west. The diffusion of Greek civilization, which the Romans admired, was made possible because of the political unification of the western world under Roman auspices. In that achievement Rome made its distinctive and original contribution. The Romans had a genius for administering a great empire, bringing law and order to many peoples.

A great crisis was experienced by the western world in the fifth century A.D. After more than six hundred years of unchallenged power, Rome fell under the impact of a shattering series of invasions. Crossing the Rhine-Danube frontier, Germanic invaders overthrew Roman authority in the provinces and even sacked Rome itself. As we now see it, the crucial question was, would the culture of the west that had been originated in the Near East, brilliantly enriched by the Greeks, and spread by the Romans, be destroyed by the uncouth barbarians? For a century or two the issue was in doubt, but it gradually became apparent that a new and powerful agency was on the side of preservation, the Christian Church. The Church did much, perhaps more than any other institution, to blend the Roman, Greek, and Germanic elements into a new pattern of civilization that finally emerged as modern European civilization.

## THE GREEK WORLD: 3000 B.C.—200 B.C.

<b>3000-1200 B.C.</b>	<b>Aegean Age</b>	
3000	Emergence of Aegean civilization	
2500	Troy a wealthy city	
2200-1400	Cretans dominate commerce	Golden Age of Crete, 1600-1400
	Greek tribes pushing into Aegean world	Palace of Cnossus
1400-1200	Mycenae and Tiryns reach summit of prosperity	Forerunners of Greek city-states and medieval feudal castles
1200	Greek tribes complete conquest	
<b>1200-337</b>	<b>Hellenic Age</b>	
1200-800	AGE OF KINGS	
1200	Development of Greek city-states	Homeric Age, 1200-800
		<i>Iliad</i> and <i>Odyssey</i> , 9th century
		Greece poor and disunited
1000-700	Political sovereignty vested in Athens	
750-550	AGE OF NOBLES	
	Greek aristocracy in power	Sappho, about 600
7th century	Rise of middle class	Coinage introduced
	Rise of social discontent	Colonies founded
750-500		Trade, industry increased
550-508	AGE OF TYRANTS	
550	Advent of despotism	Greek commerce expands
		Birth of Greek philosophy
		Thales, 6th century
508	Cleisthenes restricts despotism	
492-431	AGE OF DEMOCRACY	
492	Persian Wars begin	
479	Persians defeated at Plataea	
460-429	Perfection of Athenian democracy	Age of Pericles
		Herodotus, Phidias, Hippocrates, Aeschylus, Euripides, Sophocles, Aristophanes
431-337	DECLINE OF HELLENIC CULTURE	
431	Peloponnesian War begins	
404	Collapse of Athenian power	Plato, 427?-347?
	Continued civil war in Greece	
<b>337-146?</b>	<b>Hellenistic Age</b>	Aristotle, Epicureans, Stoics
337	Macedonia conquers Greece	
334-331	Alexander conquers Persia, Near East	
330-324	Campaign in Far East	
	Alexandria center of Hellenistic culture	Euclid, Eratosthenes, Archimedes;
275	Alexander's empire divided: Egypt (Ptolemies), Syria and Palestine (Seleucids), Greece and Macedonia (Antigonos)	<i>Venus di Milo</i>
212-146?	Rome conquers Greece	

## CHAPTER 5

# *The City-States of Greece*



SCARRED and weather-beaten, the ruins on the Athenian Acropolis stand against a vivid blue Aegean sky, overlooking the trees and buildings of a modern city sprawled beneath. Their columns shattered by time and foreign hands, their roofs no longer resisting the elements, and their steps strewn with the wreckage of the ages, these ruins are mute symbols of a departed civilization. Where now we see mutilated statues, there once stood some of the most perfect specimens of the sculptor's art the world has ever known. And where now the flagstones echo only to the footstep of the curious visitor, once there paced among the temples men whose names have outlived the centuries which ravaged the Acropolis—artists, playwrights, poets, historians, scientists, statesmen, and philosophers.

The Acropolis in its prime must have presented a striking picture. No pock-marked pillars and dingy friezes, but gleaming temples and statuary. Standing on the west brow of the Acropolis was a giant statue of Athena herself, the warrior goddess of the proud Athenians. Fashioned of bronze, facing southwestward, her helmet and spear tip gleamed in the sunlight and flashed to Athenian sailors far at sea the welcome signal that soon they would be safely home. In the perfectly proportioned Parthenon stood another statue of the goddess, fashioned of gold and ivory by the renowned Phidias and judged a marvel by all who looked upon it.

Today these statues have disappeared, and the Acropolis is a ruin. But even in the twentieth century there is an imperishable spirit about the Acropolis that can give us the clue to the civilization which created its grandeur. The Parthenon, despite its broken columns, remains a masterpiece of proportion and symmetry. The Erechtheum still

shows the delicate beauty of the Ionic order. The walls that rise from the rock cliffs are a perfect example of the blending of man's artistry with nature's beauty.

Here, then, are our clues to the glory of Greek civilization. Throughout the history of the Greek people we shall catch glimpses repeatedly of their love of proportion and symmetry, not only in their architecture but in everything they attempted. Despite their trials and strenuous political life we shall find them serene and poised. And always they will be blending their acts to harmonize with nature. That is why the Greeks disliked exaggeration, why they tried to create a naturalistic philosophy instead of worshipping unknown supernatural forces as the orient had done, and why they found their deepest inspiration in reproducing in their sculpture the unadorned human body.

The Greeks were not perfect. They quarreled continually, and the strong individualism which moved them to perform wonderful deeds blinded them to the need of cooperation, which alone could have saved them from themselves. But despite their weaknesses they created a magnificent civilization.

### *The Aegean Civilization: Transition from Asia to Europe*

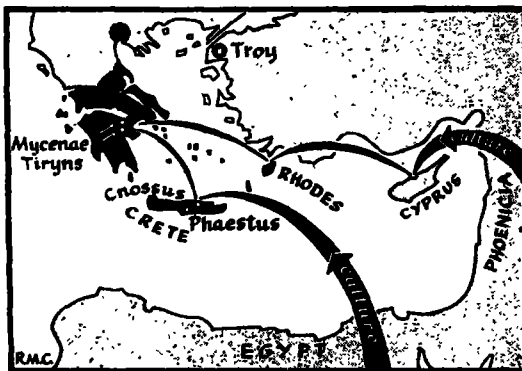
**Archaeological discoveries.** An erroneous view was once held by scholars that Greek culture developed independently of any oriental influence. We know now that such an assumption is false because of the discovery of an advanced civilization which existed in and about the Aegean Sea as far back as the fourth millennium B.C. Three main centers of Aegean culture were found: Troy on the coast of Asia Minor, Mycenae and Tiryns on the Greek mainland, and Cnossus on the island of Crete.

The discovery and archaeological excavation of Troy read like a romance. Scholars had long believed that the city existed only in the epic stories attributed to Homer, the

*Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. But Heinrich Schliemann, who had carefully studied his Homer as a youth, believed otherwise. When, therefore, he had accumulated a fortune, he decided to go to the legendary site of Troy, not far distant from the Hellespont. He began excavations in 1870 and within four years had unearthed nine cities built one on top of another. Because of his belief that the second city was the Homeric Troy (a belief later disproved), Schliemann, in his haste to excavate the second town, committed many archaeological blunders and destroyed much valuable data. Nevertheless we owe thanks to the amateur but enthusiastic student of classical civilizations for proving that Troy actually existed.

Later Schliemann excavated the cities of Mycenae and Tiryns, showing that centers of Aegean civilization had existed on the Greek mainland. But the most valuable archaeological research was performed by Sir Arthur Evans when in 1899 he began his excavations at Cnossus on the isle of Crete. Because Crete was probably the source of the Aegean civilization, we will study first the Cretan culture.

**Cretan civilization.** We do not know what people inhabited the Aegean cities. They have been called Aegeans and were probably of the Mediterranean race. When they came to Crete is also uncertain, although it is thought that they migrated there about 8000 B.C. during the Neolithic period, for no Paleolithic remains have been found on the island. Copper



*Along the trade routes to Rhodes and Crete, and thence to Mycenae and Tiryns in Greece and Troy in Asia Minor, spread the culture of Phoenicians and Egyptians.*

was not used, but from about 2800-1200 B.C. extensive use was made of bronze. Some scholars think the bronze culture of Europe and the orient originated in the Aegean. Iron was not known to the native Aegeans.

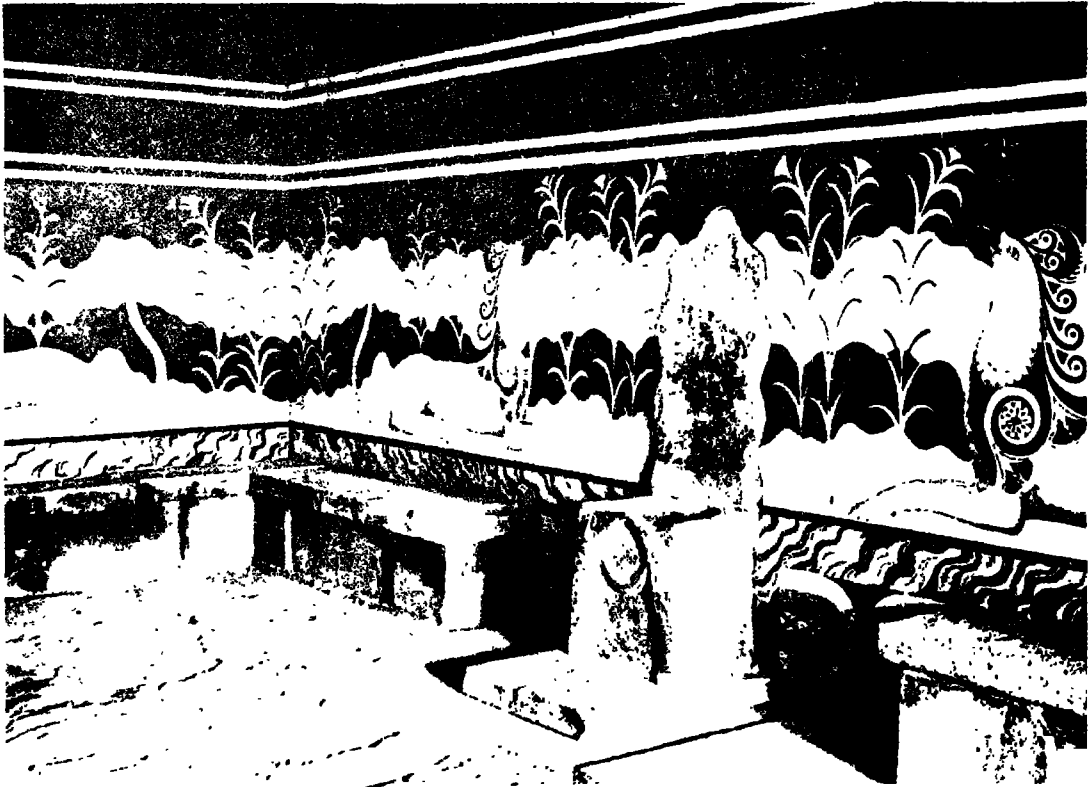
The excellent geographical and strategic site of Crete offered both rich commercial possibilities and comparative protection from outside warring forces. Hence many rich trading towns arose on the island, of which two are especially noteworthy, Cnossus and Phaestus. The Cretans dominated Aegean commerce from 2200 B.C. to their fall about 1400 B.C., exporting their beautiful pottery as well as wine, oils, saffron, and costly purple dyes. Clay tablets found at Cnossus (whose script has not yet been deciphered) would seem to indicate the prominent role that business dealings played in the island's life. Crete traded with Egypt, but although Egyptian ideas found favor, Cretan art was original.

**Aegean art.** Egyptian craftsmen taught the Cretans to use pottery wheels, a method which



CRETAN OCTOPUS VASE

allows for greater delicacy of form and speed of construction than the coil method used by early peoples. The potter deposits his clay in the center of a wheel which is turned by his



*Perhaps King Minos, in whose fabulous labyrinth Theseus slew the Minotaur, held court from this throne in the council room of the Palace at Cnossus, under the aegis of two haughty griffins.*





THE QUEEN'S STAIRCASE IN THE PALACE AT CNOSSUS

foot or knee. By a series of pushing and pulling movements he brings the vessel to the desired height and shape. It is then fired in a kiln. The Cretans and Egyptians decorated their pottery with paint after firing.

Potters as well as painters found inspiration in nature. Flowers and animals were stylized to fit the shape of the pots. The Octopus vase (page 109) is an example of the use of such subjects in a truly decorative manner. The encircling tentacles of the octopus emphasize the round form of the vase.

From the ruins of the palace at Cnossus we may picture Cretan life. The palace was luxurious and seems to have been furnished with hot and cold water as well as a sewage system. There was a chapel set aside for the cult of the Earth Mother, with frescoes depicting snakes which had a certain significance in connection with the worship of this deity. The palace had innumerable rooms and courts, great staircases, and beautifully painted walls showing ceremonial bull-fights as well as animals and birds. Cretan architecture, like Egyptian, was

of post and lintel construction. But in its reflection of secular court life it was very different from the Egyptian. It was a palace architecture with comparatively little space set aside for religion, whereas in Egypt the buildings built well enough to endure were all temples or tombs. The columns supporting the stone structure were of wood with the bases smaller than the capitals, a distortion characteristic of Cretan architecture. This gave a certain sophistication to the buildings which was probably quite in keeping with a luxurious life. The Cretans were a maritime and commercial people who managed to combine their practical bent of mind with a splendid sense of artistic appropriateness and decoration.

The paintings of these wealthy Aegean peoples, in cities on the mainland as well as in Crete, again reflected the sophistication of their life. Their frescoes were extremely decorative. Many were secular in subject and tone, and their flat brilliant colors with strong black outlines made for very pleasant decoration.

The figures in the paintings were purposely distorted, with strange pinched-in waists and elaborate costumes and hairdresses, like that of the priestess illustrated, in order to give them an air of opulence and elegance.

We find no large-size sculpture in Crete, but there were many small wooden figurines, probably used in religious rites. The most famous of these is the Snake Goddess, with her pinched-in waist and coiling snakes.

**The Golden Age in Crete.** The climax of Cretan civilization came in the Golden Age in the sixteenth and fifteenth centuries B.C. During the Golden Age grand palaces were built overlooking the towns of sun-dried brick houses near the fields where peasants cultivated the land and raised cattle. Cretan supremacy remained unchallenged in the Aegean until the fourteenth century, when internal revolution or external invasion brought about its collapse, and the civilization which had served as a link between the orient and Europe perished within the next two centuries.

**Troy.** Meanwhile Aegean civilization had been flourishing on the coast of Asia Minor.

Somewhere between 3000 and 2500 B.C. there arose in the northwestern corner of Asia Minor, near the Hellespont, which links the Mediterranean and Sea of Marmora, a small Late Stone Age village called Troy. This center, renowned as the site of the Trojan war, was probably built at this strategic point by men seeking profitable trading routes. Here at Troy they could command the traffic between Europe and Asia at the entrance into the Black Sea.

Whether Troy, and Mycenae and Tiryns in Greece were built by Cretans as trading outposts or by other people who adopted the island's culture has not been ascertained. But by 2500 B.C. the Trojan rulers were wealthy, and the first city (about 3000-2500 B.C.), which had a copper culture, was rebuilt into a much more sumptuous second city, possessing a fortified palace, walls and towers, and precious or-



CRETAN SNAKE GODDESS IN IVORY AND GOLD



AEGEAN PRIESTESS CARRYING CASKET (FRESCO)



LION GATEWAY AT MYCENAE

namentation. The treasure of golden earrings, hairpins, and bracelets which Schliemann found in the second city (about 2500-2000 B.C.) must have made him believe that he had stumbled into Helen of Troy's private boudoir. It was later shown that Homeric Troy

was probably the sixth city (about 1500-1200 B.C.). In all, nine cities were built at Troy over a period of some 2500 years, the last or ninth city being built by the Romans.

Because of its proximity to the Hellespont, Troy was in a good position to close the trade of the Black Sea to the Greek merchants. Since it possessed no port and the Trojan plain could produce little or nothing, the wealth of the city may well have come principally from exacting toll on all ships entering the Hellespont. If this were so, the situation must have been galling to the Greeks, who presumably determined on war to rid themselves of their rival and to conquer the Black Sea region rich in iron and gold. Whatever the cause, the Greeks were successful in the war, and Troy was destroyed. This is the factual basis of the famous Trojan war recounted by Homer.

**Mycenae and Tiryns.** The third principal center of Aegean civilization lay in the two cities of Mycenae and Tiryns on the Greek mainland, inhabited by people perhaps of the same race as the later Greeks. Again it was Schliemann who brought the towns to the attention of the astonished world. Excavating the prehistoric fortress of Mycenae, he discovered beneath the pavement of the market place a number of stone chambers containing many gold ornaments, of which the most interesting was a splendid crown, relic of a king.

Aegean culture on the Greek peninsula reached its height from about 1500 to 1000 B.C. It was later in coming to fruition than that of Crete or Troy. Mycenae and Tiryns were protected by city walls against inland attack and in this way differed from the cities on Crete. The Lion Gateway to the city of Mycenae shows the use of corbeling to relieve the lintel of the weight of the masonry wall.

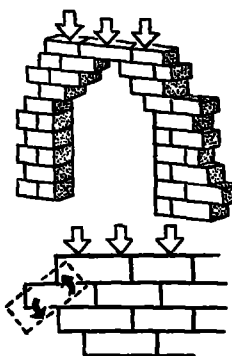
Besides Mycenae and Tiryns there were several other Aegean centers on the Greek peninsula. All existed on their commerce and piratical practices. Egypt, Crete, Cyprus, and the regions to the north offered profitable returns, and through commerce came many valuable culture impacts.

The civilization on the mainland of Greece had advanced from one centering solely in the tribe to one in which the people congregated in small cities to carry on maritime trade. In Egypt, Mesopotamia, India, and China we have noticed the eventual breakdown of initial biological groupings and the re-alignment of

#### THE CORBELED ARCH spans an

opening with layers of material that overhang from each side until they meet. The detail below shows how the lever action of each overhanging piece is balanced by the heavy material above pushing down on its supported end. With stone as the building material this method of making an opening requires massive walls for support.

Weight of material above opening pushes down on arch



people into political groups for the purpose of coping more effectively with new political and economic situations. The small Aegean city with its fortifications was a forerunner of both the later Greek city-state and the medieval feudal castle.

The king possessed much of the land, which was cultivated by his dependents. He gave other lands to his nobles and advisers; these estates were tilled by serfs and tenants. Some freemen had lands in the country, which they retained permanently, but they lived in the fortified city for protection against attack.

**Contacts with other civilizations.** There can be no doubt whatsoever that the Aegeans profited by the many culture contacts which they had with contemporary Asiatic civilizations. In the excavation of the oldest settlement at Troy, an ax-head of white jade was found. It indicates that trade actually existed as far back as the third millennium B.C. between the Far East and the Mediterranean, for white jade was used only in China. The Aegeans also had trade contacts with northern Europe, since amber from the Baltic shores was imported to Mycenae.

The greatest contact was with Egypt. In the early part of the sixteenth century B.C. Aegean vases were represented at Thebes on a wall painting. And in the chamber-tombs of Mycenae have been discovered three pieces of Egyptian porcelain of the reign of Amenhotep

III (about 1500 B.C.). Aegean artists probably derived from Egypt certain art techniques and fashions in ornamentation. They had many contacts with the kingdom to the south and enjoyed a profitable commerce.

**The Greek invasions.** The fourteenth and thirteenth centuries B.C. witnessed the flourishing of the Mycenaean culture. However, Indo-European-speaking invaders were gradually seeping into Greece from the north all the time. Successive waves of invaders pushed southward into the peninsula and took possession of all the Aegean world. By 1200 B.C. Aegean civilization was almost completely swamped by the northern barbarians. The Cretan writing, for example, disappeared, and only a few geographical names like Mount Parnassus remain of the old Aegean language. Yet enough of the old culture survived to serve as a foundation for the Greek civilization that was to emerge later. Those Aegeans who did not flee before the invaders intermarried with them, and therefore the Greek, or Hellenic, people of whom we speak today are really a mixture of Aegean and Indo-European-speaking types.

The Aegeans were influenced to a considerable degree by the civilizations of Egypt and to a much lesser extent by those of the Near and Far East. Therefore, when the Greeks overran the Aegean cities, they accumulated many oriental culture traits.

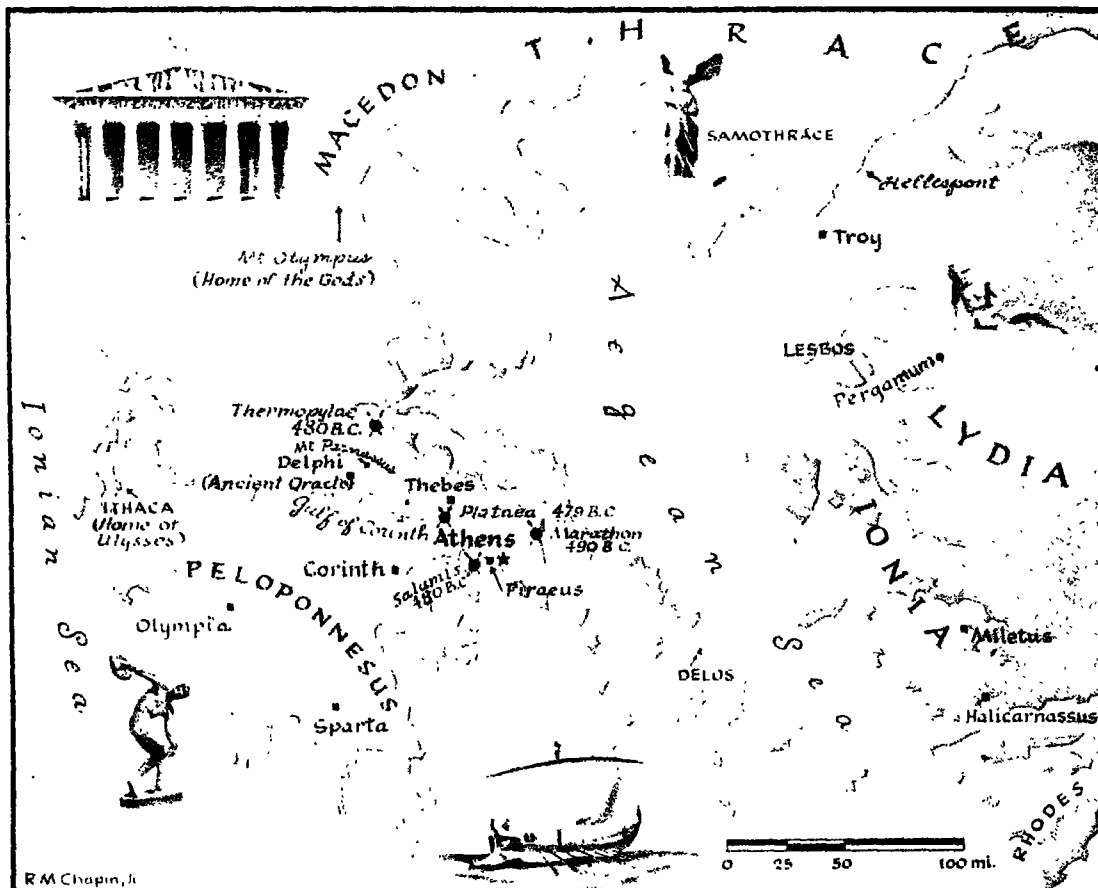
### *The Geography and the Racial History of Greece*

**Geography.** The words "Hellenic" and "Hellenistic" are used in a special sense. The "Hellenic" age refers to that period in which the Greeks created a civilization whose principal center was on the Greek peninsula and whose chief city was Athens. This Hellenic period endured until 337 B.C., when the Greek city-states were conquered by Macedon. When Alexander the Great diffused Hellenic culture throughout his empire, he inaugurated the "Hellenistic" period—that is, the extension of Greek civilization to non-Greeks, the counter-influence of non-Greek cultures upon Greece, and the transfer of the intellectual capital of the pre-Roman world from Athens to Alexandria in Egypt. The Hellenistic age ended in approximately 146 B.C.

The Hellenic world included the Aegean and Ionian islands, the Greek colonies founded

on the coast of Asia Minor, and the jagged Greek peninsula of some twenty-five thousand square miles of mountain ranges and narrow plains, roughly the area of the map, page 114. Hundreds of small islands dot the Aegean Sea, and the mainland is heavily indented, making possible the growth of a maritime commerce and the founding of protected cities and ports in deep bays and harbors. The climate is warm and diversified, and the winds are favorable for the use of sailing-ships.

But the peninsula's geographical peculiarities were by no means a total blessing. The interior of Greece is crisscrossed with numerous mountain ranges, dividing the land into many plains and making communication between communities very difficult (see map, page 115). The soil is comparatively poor, and only one fifth of the total area is arable. Fur-



thermore the mineral resources are extremely limited, except for excellent marble and granite—aids to Greek sculpture and architecture. Ancient Greece was almost forced by its geographical and topographical limitations to be economically poor and politically disunited. But let us not overestimate the effect of geography on Greek civilization.

**The Greek peoples.** Who were the Greeks? First of all we must rid ourselves of the fallacious idea that they were biologically superior to other people in antiquity. They were a mixture of dark, long-headed Mediterranean and blond, round-headed Alpine types.

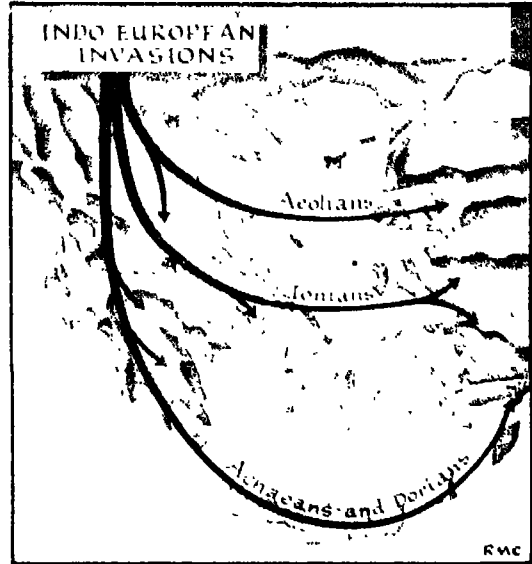
Perhaps as early as 3000 B.C. barbarian tribes of Indo-European-speaking pastoral people began to drift into the Aegean world from the grasslands of the Danube valley. These tribes were related biologically to the Indo-European people who swept through the mountain passes of northwest India between 2000 and 1000 B.C. As we learned in our chapter on early India,

the Indo-Europeans probably came originally from an area bordering the shores of the Caspian Sea. One branch (including the barbarian tribes later known as Greeks) surged westward, and another branch (the Indo-Aryans) conquered Hindustan. These two branches were closely tied not only biologically but also philologically. Consider, for example, the similarities of the following words. In Sanskrit we find *pitā*, in Greek *patēr*, in Latin *pater*, in German *vater*, and in English *father*—all have the same meaning.

The Indo-European invasions of the Aegean world began in earnest around 2000 B.C. and continued for a thousand years. The main peoples who overran the Greek peninsula and ventured into the Aegean were Achaeans, Ionians, Aeolians, and Dorians. The Achaeans were especially important, invading Greece about 1800-1400 B.C., sacking Aegean cities, and perhaps destroying the culture of Crete in the fifteenth century B.C.

Between 1150 and 1000 B.C. a new wave of Alpine invaders, the Dorians, swept through the region, bringing their herds and the Iron Age to Greece. They defeated the Achaeans, occupied most of the Peloponnesus, and later settled also in Crete and the southwestern portion of Asia Minor. The Dorians destroyed the remaining Mycenaean culture. The people whom they dispersed emigrated to the northern Peloponnesus and Ionia in Asia Minor.

As the emigrating groups had absorbed much of the Mycenaean civilization, they developed, especially in Ionia, a culture which contained a mixture of some of the best elements of both Greek and Aegean life. The civilization which was to culminate in the glory of Athenian culture was thus born in Ionia. It was quite natural that it should have developed here first, for the Ionian Greeks mingled with Near Eastern peoples in Asia Minor and communicated with Sardis, the capital of Lydia. From them the Ionians learned weaving, embroidery, purple dyeing, metalurgy, and the use of coined money (perhaps a



Lydian invention). Through their influence an alphabet developed, modified to suit the language which the Greek invaders spoke.

### *The Political Evolution of Greece*

**The age of kings.** The period from about 1200 to 800 B.C. is called the Homeric age, because the epics of Homer give a vivid picture of contemporary life. The period has also been called the dark age for all the Greek world, because the Dorians had destroyed the old Mycenaean culture and Greek civilization on the peninsula was at a low ebb. During the Homeric age people lived by a crude agricultural and pastoral economy. Their manufactures were few, and barter prevailed. Extensive trade developed only toward the close of the period. Political organization was still tribal, and the state consisted of a group whose members were united by kinship of blood. The tribe was headed by a king, while lesser chieftains made up the noble class and council of advisers to the king. In addition there was an assembly made up of all the weapon-bearing men of the tribe, to give voice to the wishes of the non-noble tribesmen.

**The age of nobles.** By the middle of the eighth century the nobles had taken over the control of government from the tribal king. The transfer of power from hereditary kings to aristocratic families marked a departure from the old kinship organization of the state.

Political organization was no longer based on groups united by blood ties; the territorial state based on law had become the unit of government. Greece had now undergone the same political evolution that we discovered in Egypt, Mesopotamia, India, China, and the Aegean civilization. Politics was now governed by class interests, and the tribal ownership of land was transferred to private control. The nobles, together with the rising class of wealthy merchants, controlled the government to further their own interests. The common people had little or no part in their government, for the assembly came to have the right only of concurring with the wishes of the powerful council of nobles.

Between 750 and 650 B.C. even the kings disappeared in many cases. For example, the Athenian monarch was deprived of all power until he remained only the religious leader of the people, while the nobles of the city appointed one of their group as leader in war and another as *archon*, or ruler of the state, in domestic matters. In Sparta the king's power had been split up by the innovation of appointing a second king. (Spartan royal power was further limited by the election of *ephors*—"over-

seers"—who had almost limitless power.) Thus the nobles came to be absolute masters.

**The Greek city-states.** The city-state, called *polis* by the Greeks, was the basic element in the political, social, and economic life of the Greeks. Originally the *polis* was the elevated, fortified site, or acropolis, upon which had been built a stronghold where inhabitants of the neighborhood might take refuge in times of attack. The elevated area also contained the temple. As time went on and commerce grew, there developed below the *polis* another center where people lived and traded at the market place. The lower town was called the *asty*. When the upper and lower towns amalgamated and the neighboring territory was taken into the *polis'* jurisdiction, the final stage in the evolution of the Greek city-state had been reached. (The term *polis* then came to mean the whole city-state.) The development of the Greek city-state seems to have begun in the Ionian cities of Asia Minor as far back as Aegean times. Later the same evolution took place on the Greek mainland. The city-state evolved because of the need of defense, the growth of commerce, the centering of religion in the upper town, and the tendency of people in small areas to amalgamate into more powerful political units.

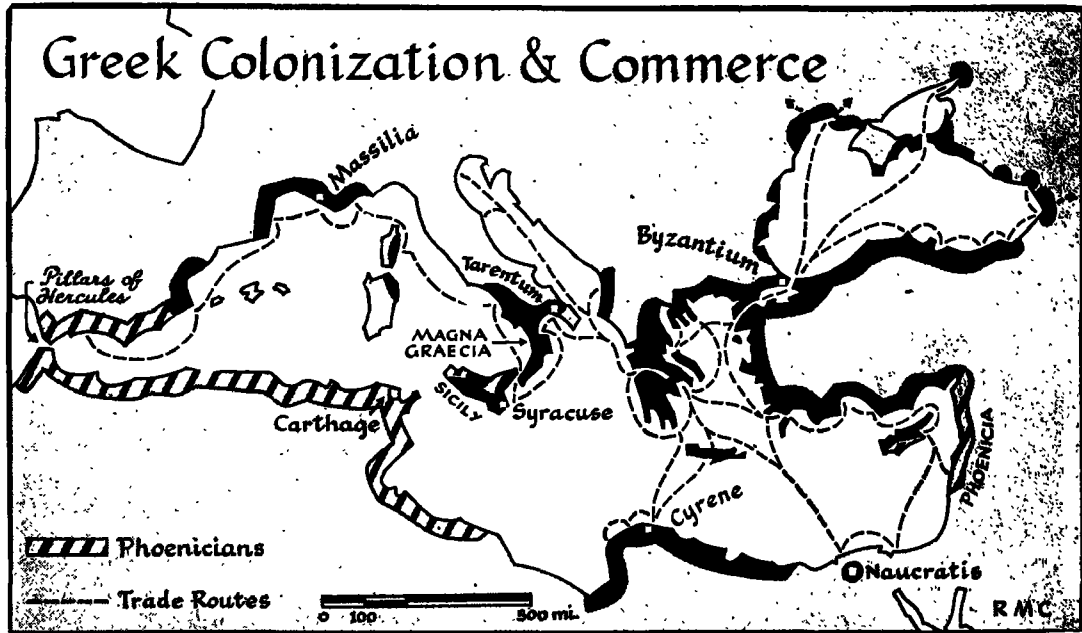
The keynote of the *polis* was absolute and fiery independence. The *polis* was not large; although Athens at the height of her power may have possessed as many as 40,000 citizens (and possibly as many slaves), most of the other city-states did not have more than 5000 free inhabitants. Nor was the area large, the general sizes ranging from fifty to five hundred square miles. Yet each Greek loved his city-state passionately, the more so because he had an active voice in its political life, for each state, democratic or oligarchic, had a council and public meeting-place for its citizens. It was little wonder that the citizen felt so patriotic. He considered himself bound by blood and civic ties to the *polis*; he gloried in his city's achievements in war and peace; he scorned the customs, the religious practices, and the dialects of other cities because they were different from his own. Here we find the clue to the inability of the Greek city-states ever to unite into a permanent confederacy, and here also we find the cause of those endless and fruitless intra-city wars which bled the great city-states of Athens, Sparta, Corinth,

and Thebes to such a state of weakness in the Peloponnesian War that they soon fell an easy prey to the invaders from Macedon.

Government in the age of nobles was in the hands of those who held property. During the period two important developments in Greek expansion began—colonization and economic growth, processes which continued from 750 to about 500 B.C. Piratical practices by the Greeks had made them acquainted with the intricate shorelines and sea routes of the Aegean. Such knowledge proved of benefit for both colonizing and trading projects.

**Colonization.** Why did many Greeks wish to emigrate at this time? First of all, the land in Greece and Ionia was poor and scarce and was controlled largely by the noble landowners, and as the population was increasing, the problem of an adequate food supply became more and more acute. Secondly, the rising cities needed new markets for the disposal of their products. Thirdly, the political and social unrest caused by the ruthless policies of the nobles forced, or at least encouraged, many of the less fortunate Greeks to emigrate. Lastly, many Greeks were prompted by love of adventure and the desire to seek new fields.

The new Greek colonies were planned out in detail before the emigrants left the mother city. The colony was independent politically, but sentimental and economic ties usually persisted, and the success of the new city generally resulted in increased trade activities for the mother city (*metropolis*). The earliest and most prolific metropolis was Miletus, spreading colonies throughout the Black Sea region. Cities were also founded along the Thracian and Macedonian coasts, for here were plentiful supplies of gold, fish, and timber. At a later date, "many a Columbus pushed his ship into this strange region (the unknown west) of mysterious dangers on the distant borders of the world, where the heroes were believed to live in the Islands of the Blest."<sup>1</sup> Sicily and southern Italy were extensively colonized, the region being known to the peoples of Italy as *Magna Graecia*, Great Greece. Corinth was especially active in founding colonies in that area. The Greeks pushed still farther westward, creating a city at Massilia (Marseilles) and towns in Spain. By 600 B.C. the Greeks had expanded along the northern shore of the Mediterranean from the Black Sea almost to the Pillars of Hercules (Gibraltar).



Meanwhile the Phoenicians had colonized the southern shore (except where the Greeks founded Naucratis in Egypt), establishing such important settlements as Carthage. The future centuries were to witness a gigantic contest between the Carthaginians and the successors of the Greeks for control of the Mediterranean.

**Trade and industry.** With the colonizing activities went an increase in trade. Athens and Corinth were especially active in promoting a commercial expansion throughout the Hellenic world. They exported metalwork, pottery, and luxury goods, importing from the colonies in turn raw products such as grain and fish. The Greek craftsmen, stimulated by the growing trade and desirous of competing favorably with the Phoenicians, increased their skill so that after 600 B.C. their handicraft products surpassed those of their competitors. Athens turned out quantities of beautifully decorated vases which found their way all over the Mediterranean. Shipbuilding flourished, and larger vessels were built, merchantmen propelled by sails and warships propelled by oars, which could out sail those of Phoenicia.

**Money and the middle class.** Meanwhile, the Ionians had learned about coined money from the Lydians, and the Greeks were making use of this new aid to business by the seventh century. Where wealth before then had depended upon the ownership of lands

and flocks, the use of money allowed the rise of a new social class whose wealth was counted in currency—the industrial, or middle, class. Coined money is of great aid to such urban dwellers as merchants and craftsmen, who obviously cannot keep large flocks in cities or hand over sections of land to some other merchant in a distant country in return for merchandise. Since the use of coinage by the Lydians, businessmen have found it indispensable as the most serviceable means of exchange.

**The rise of tyrants.** We have noted that the nobles manipulated the affairs of government to suit their own interest and that they based their right to rule on their ownership of land. Meanwhile the rising middle class demanded more political power in keeping with their economic power. And both classes were profiting at the expense of the peasants, who had been forced to mortgage their lands because of bad agricultural conditions, or were being sold into slavery for debt, or were forced to flee the country. Thus the noble and middle classes were set against the peasants and against each other. Money was beginning to have a louder voice in government than birth, and the nobles were split up into factions among themselves. All these factors explain the next major political change, the rise of tyrants.

The tyrants (the word did not originally have the unpleasant meaning it now possesses)



arose in most of the city-states that were developing along commercial lines—the Ionian cities, Athens, Corinth, and the cities of Sicily. Tyrants appeared because the common people demanded a change; therefore they can be considered champions of the will of the majority, “champions of democracy.” The tyrant was often some noble who promised reforms for the dissatisfied classes or a magistrate who refused to give up his office when his term had expired. He was a usurper, or unconstitutional ruler, but because he acted for the majority instead of perpetuating the rule of the nobles, he was often a public benefactor.

The tyrant usually upheld the established laws. He reestablished order by putting an end to the oppression by the nobles, the ruthless exploitation by the landowners, and the harsh sentences of the magistrates. Moreover he was interested in fostering public works, encouraging trade, building canals, roads, and temples, and patronizing literature and the other arts. That in turn contributed to the education of the common people so that the time came, at least in the more progressive city-states such as Athens, when they were capable of ruling by themselves and for themselves without having to rely on tyrants.

**Athens under the council of nobles.** The people living in the neighborhood of Athens, primarily Ionians, came to look upon the small city of Athens as their capital; to Athens they owed allegiance. This vesting of political sovereignty in Athens, so that in time everyone in Attica came to call himself an Athenian, probably took place between 1000 and 700 B.C.

Politically the growth of Athens can be traced from monarchy to a limited democracy only through the tortuous channels of rule by aristocracy and tyrants. In early times Athens had a king, a council of nobles, and a popular assembly. The people were grouped into four tribes; membership in one of these tribes was a requisite for citizenship. While the assembly had little real political power, the council of nobles had judicial, religious, and administrative functions. By the eighth century this council had begun to undermine the king's power. First, it reduced the life tenure of the ruler to a single decade. This situation limited the king's ability to rule efficiently. His importance was weakened still further about the year 700 B.C., when the office of “war-archon” was created. Then, in 683 B.C., all offices were made

annual. At the same time the archon superseded the king as head of the state, while the king now concerned himself with religious affairs. Not long afterward six *thesmothetae*—eventually judges—were created to look after the public documents. The real power in Athens was still held by the council of nobles.

The power of the aristocracy of birth was weakened by the reorganization of the army. To determine their military status, citizens were divided into three classes, according to their wealth. Of these groups the most powerful was the heavy infantry, made up of the great mass of Athenians. This group was to make itself a force which could not be ignored by the aristocracy, especially since noble birth alone no longer ensured complete political power to the nobles. In 632 B.C. Athens narrowly escaped a tyranny, which was put down principally by the heavy infantry. The aristocratic landowners were becoming increasingly unpopular because of their high-handed treatment of the tenant-farmers. Stability had to be achieved among the Athenian classes.

**The Draconian code.** In 621 B.C. an attempt toward the achievement of that stability was made by the codification of oral law in Athens by a noble named Draco. Prior to this time the laws had been unwritten, interpreted by aristocratic judges with results scarcely beneficial to the common people. Little is known of Draco's reforms except that they were harsh enough—so much so, in fact, that one orator made the criticism that the code had been written not in ink but in blood. For example, the death penalty could be inflicted for stealing an apple or a cabbage. Nevertheless, the code put crime under state jurisdiction rather than at the disposition of clan or family action.

**Solon.** Economic unrest continued to harass Athens, and the cry by the common people for reform was answered in 594 B.C. by the appointment of a man named Solon as archon. This statesman came from one of Athens' oldest noble families and was himself moderately rich. He was responsible for a great many reforms, including the freeing of men who had fallen into slavery for debt and the inauguration of a different money standard which brought Athens into more favorable commercial relationships with other Greek cities. He developed Athens as an industrial center by encouraging skilled artisans to reside there through the promise of citizenship, and

he reformed the law code, making it less harsh than that of Draco, and at the same time welding a stronger tie between the citizen and the state at the expense of the family. Solon added to the three classes whose status was based on wealth by creating a special class for the richest citizens. By this revision of the constitution, Solon switched the basis for holding office from one of birth to one of wealth. Thus while the right to be a magistrate or archon was restricted to the two upper property classes, the lowest class could now vote in the assembly which elected the magistrates and passed on state measures. Solon also inaugurated a new body, the council of four hundred—one hundred members from each of the four tribes. This council was chosen from the three upper classes, and its function was to prepare agenda for ratification by the assembly. Still another innovation at this time was the creation of a new court, the *heliaea*, which heard appeals from decisions made by the archons and in addition tried magistrates for misdeeds. It cannot be said that Solon was consciously working for the creation of a government by and for the people, but his reforms, especially the broadening of the franchise to include the least wealthy in the state, and the functioning of the new court, prepared the ground for Athens' later limited democracy. Having contributed so much to the welfare of his city, Solon then voluntarily left Athens for a number of years rather than make himself a tyrant.

**Pisistratus and his sons.** But a tyrant soon came. From 560 to 527 B.C. Pisistratus ruled Athens. A benevolent despot, he fostered commerce and manufactures, aided agriculture, confiscated the estates of unruly nobles and divided them up among the landless, and patronized the arts. Pisistratus died of old age in 527 B.C., when his power fell principally to one of his sons, Hippias, himself a capable statesman. But the Athenians were tiring of tyrant rule. The murder of his brother in 514 B.C. turned Hippias into a harsh ruler. As a result Hippias was besieged and exiled in 510 B.C.

**Cleisthenes.** The nobles who had been exiled by the tyrants now returned and strove to regain their former political supremacy as well as their confiscated estates. But a new champion came to the aid of the people in the person of Cleisthenes, another noble. Gaining control in 508 B.C., Cleisthenes broke up the

old tribal divisions based on kinship and clan solidarity and substituted ten units based on locality. In this way he shattered the power of the old noble clans and equalized the population along territorial lines. He also abolished Solon's council of four hundred and replaced it by a new council of five hundred, with each of the ten tribes contributing fifty members chosen annually by lot. This council took care of financial and foreign affairs and initiated legislation which only the assembly, meeting once every ten days, could ratify. Each tribe took its turn as the presiding committee in the council meetings, thus giving each Athenian an equal chance to shape governmental policies. Cleisthenes introduced the new law of *ostracism* (public banishment of too-powerful leaders dangerous to the state), thus assuring the Athenian populace greater strength.

**Athenian democracy.** The government was to become even more democratic in the next century. Property qualifications still limited the choice of the magistrates to the two upper economic classes, and the old aristocratic council of nobles still remained. In the fifth century, however, after the wars with Persia had been brought to a successful conclusion and the Greeks were free to work out their own pattern of living, Athenian democracy reached its height. The nobles were stripped of every important power except jurisdiction in cases involving homicide.

The government of Athens then became vested in three important bodies. First, all male citizens over eighteen could participate in the assembly, although the absence of pay for their services prevented the poorest class from attending sessions unless something very important or spectacular was taking place. Second, the council of five hundred initiated legislation and appointed the presiding officers of the assembly. Council members received a daily stipend for their work. Among their many duties were supervising the magistrates, constructing and maintaining naval vessels and public buildings, prosecuting treason before the assembly, and, as Aristotle puts it, "the guardianship of the constitution." A third important branch of the government was the *heliaea*, or popular court. Originally a court of appeal from decisions of the archons, the *heliaea* became the great criminal court comprising six thousand jurors (six hundred

taken by lot from each tribe). A juror was required to be over thirty years old and was paid for his services. The amazing size of the jury was intended to avoid bribery and intimidation. All decisions were made by majority vote.

Most governmental officials were chosen by lot annually. Magistrates so chosen had to account for their acts to the assembly. Except for the military leaders, all magistrates received payment for their services. The result was that "When we consider the jurors, soldiers, and sailors, we have at the very least 20,000 Athenians who were on the pay roll of their city."<sup>2</sup> The archonship was by this time of little power, and the most important posts in the government were filled by the ten generals (*strategoi*). Because reelection was possible after a general had served his year's term, the statesman Pericles was voted into office some fifteen times. The generals were at once the commanders of the army and navy and the cabinet ministers.

Athens was a limited democracy in that probably more than half her population were foreigners and slaves who had no voice in the government. But within these limits Athenian democracy made noteworthy contributions. The ideal prevailed that all citizens could participate fruitfully in the government. In the words ascribed to Pericles:

"Our form of government does not enter into rivalry with the institutions of others. We do not copy our neighbors, but are an example to them. It is true that we are called a democracy, for the administration is in the hands of the many and not of the few. But while the law secures equal justice to all alike in their private disputes, the claim of excellence is also recognized; and when a citizen is in any way distinguished, he is preferred to the public service, not as a matter of privilege, but as the reward of merit. Neither is poverty a bar, but a man may benefit his country whatever be the obscurity of his condition."<sup>3</sup>

Around 460-429 B.C., when Pericles was her most noted statesman, Athens enriched the world with her learning and art. The Periclean age did indeed represent the height of Athenian democracy, and unquestionably the political freedom enjoyed by the citizens was of immense value in aiding them to make such remarkable attainments. Athens enjoyed a

"pure" democracy, that is, the entire citizen body gathered to participate in government. Yet this system later worked to the disadvantage of the city-state, for excessive individualism made itself apparent especially in the fourth century. Inefficiency and corruption crept in, and the common people began to lose civic interest. But despite these defects, Athenian democracy remained far superior to the government of any other existing Greek state.<sup>4</sup>

**Sparta.** In the meantime Sparta was growing in an opposite fashion. The warlike Dorians had early conquered a large portion of the Peloponnesian peninsula. By 500 B.C. they had created a Spartan League which controlled nearly all the Peloponnesus, making Sparta the most powerful state in Greece. The actual Spartan citizens, however, numbered fewer than 25,000, and as no other people were allowed any political rights, the citizen group controlled a population some twenty times as large. There were two kings of Sparta, who acted as military, religious, and legal rulers. There was also a council of twenty-eight elders and an assembly composed of the warriors. The assembly elected five *ephors* (overseers) who in reality controlled the state.

The state controlled the individual in every aspect of life. Sparta was totalitarian, for it was ruled rigidly by a military faction whose every word was law. Government officials decided at the birth of every child whether it was fit to live. If sickly, it was exposed to die. At the age of seven, the boy was taken from his mother and given a rigorous course of military discipline for twelve years. Then he was transferred to a military club (composed of about fifteen members) and at the age of thirty was considered a mature man and allowed to attend the assembly and to hold political offices. The Spartan citizen was not allowed to engage in commerce or trade. Gold and silver were forbidden as means of exchange, iron bars serving the purpose instead, since their unwieldiness was a barrier to easy trade and so discouraged citizens from commercial activity. Travel was prohibited, because dangerous ideas might be brought back to disturb the militaristic, self-satisfied government. The serfs of the Spartans (*helots*) were forced to work to produce the necessities of life for their masters. From time to time the most intelligent of the *helots* were massacred to keep the rest from uprising. An-

other group of inhabitants, the *perioeci*, were subjects of the Spartans; they lived in towns and carried on trade. While they never attained full Spartan citizenship, the *perioeci* often reached posts of importance in the state.

While Sparta developed the physical fitness of its chosen few and possessed the finest military machine in Greece, she was intellectually, politically, and culturally backward. Her self-imposed isolation forbade those culture contacts without which no balanced civilization can develop. Her accent upon the physical rather than mental qualities of man proved far more a curse than a blessing to Greece. Sparta is a classic example of rigid regimentation and intellectual stagnation.

**The Persian wars.** By 500 B.C. the more important Greek states had passed through the age of tyrants. A new series of events had arisen to confront the populace of Greece. During the sixth century Lydia had grown in power and conquered all the Greek cities in Asia Minor with the exception of Miletus. Lydia in turn was conquered by Cyrus and his Persians in 546 B.C. The Asia Minor Greeks, feeling the loss of their old independence and resenting subjection by oriental despots, revolted. From 499 to 494 B.C. the Ionian cities held out against Darius and his Persian hosts. Athens contributed twenty ships to the Ionians. The odds were too great, however, and the Persians finally suppressed the revolt, burning Miletus in revenge. Darius realized that the Ionians would be incited to revolt again by their cousins, the Athenians, unless the latter were also brought into subjection. That reason, together with the desire to punish the Athenians for their aid to the rebels, influenced Darius in 492 B.C. to send an expedition through Thrace to conquer the Greek upstarts. But a storm partially destroyed the accompanying fleet, and the Persians returned home.

In 490 B.C. a second expedition set forth from Persia and sailed across the Aegean, disembarking finally in the Bay of Marathon. The Athenians, finding the dreaded foe only twenty-six miles from their city, dispatched messengers to Sparta to beg aid and then marched off to try to repel the invader. The Persians numbered probably twenty thousand men; the Athenians had no more than half that number. But under the skillful generalship of their leader Miltiades the Athenians

won an overwhelming victory, killing perhaps six thousand of their foe, with a loss of only one hundred ninety-two of their own forces. The Greeks had won the first encounter.

Ten years later (480 B.C.) the Persians again set sail for Greece. But Athens was not unprepared this time, for under the advice of the astute statesman Themistocles, the city had built a powerful fleet with which to repel Xerxes, the Persian king (Darius had died in the meantime). The enemy came by land and sea. To meet the first danger the Spartans guarded the mountain passes, finally encountering the huge Persian host at Thermopylae. Although the Spartans under King Leonidas put up a magnificent struggle, treachery and overwhelming numbers finally succeeded in annihilating the Greeks. The enemy now advanced and burned Athens. But the tide of victory was turned as the Greek fleet destroyed the ships of Xerxes in the Bay of Salamis. With their lines of communication thus cut off, the Persians had no alternative but to retreat to Asia, especially when they were decisively defeated at the battle of Plataea in 479 B.C. Greece was safe from any future invasion from the east. It was free to work out its own destiny and thereby to influence all subsequent European history.

**The ascendancy of Athens.** The victory over Persia was principally the accomplishment of Athens. That city, together with its port of Piraeus, had been destroyed by the Persians, but they were speedily rebuilt. Thanks to the energy of Themistocles, Athens was strongly fortified by two long walls connecting it with Piraeus, and since the navy was adequately provided for, the Athenians became undisputed masters of the Aegean. Commerce now developed enormously, with Athens and Corinth sharing the increased wealth.

But as a future invasion by Persia was still feared by both the Greek cities on the peninsula and those on the coast of Asia Minor, they decided to ally themselves defensively. The alliance was known as the Delian Confederacy, because the treasury of the league was kept on the island of Delos. The wealthy cities contributed ships to the league, while the smaller centers gave yearly sums of money. Athens was made permanent head, given charge of the fleet, and allowed to collect the money for the confederacy. This arrangement enabled Athens to lay the foundations of her future empire,

and in time she became the military rival of Sparta. "Broadly speaking, the result was that the Hellenic world found itself drawn into one or the other of two groups, a maritime confederacy dominated by Athens and a continental confederacy dominated by Sparta."<sup>5</sup>

By the middle of the fifth century Athens, through the efforts of her patriots Themistocles and Cimon, had not only defeated the last Persian naval attempts but had converted the Delian league into a great Athenian maritime empire. The failure of the attempts of two small city-states to revolt from the confederacy showed that Athens no longer looked upon participation in the league as voluntary. The Athenian standards for weights, coinage, and measures were adopted throughout the league, and in 454 B.C. the treasury was removed from Delos to Athens. Some three hundred city-states, each of whose citizens possessed a fierce love of civic independence, were now virtual subjects of the Athenians. Unquestionably the empire was the strongest defense against invasion, but it was too much to expect Greek cities ever to submit permanently to the dictates of Athens.

*The Peloponnesian War.* Meanwhile the commercial and social triumph of Athens proved galling to her two chief rivals, Sparta and Corinth. The Corinthian merchants feared the inroads Athenians were making into the trade of their city. When the Peloponnesian War between Athens and the other city-states broke out in 431 B.C., the collapse of the Athenian empire began, and the Greek states forever lost that unity which alone could repel foreign invasion. Thucydides, called the first scientific historian because of his relatively accurate handling of facts, has chronicled the devastating conflict for us:

"... The Peloponnesian War was a protracted struggle and attended by calamities such as Hellas had never known within a like period of time. Never were so many cities captured and depopulated—some by Barbarians, others by Hellenes themselves fighting against one another; and several of them after their capture were repopled by strangers. Never were exile and slaughter more frequent, whether in the war or brought about by civil strife. . . . The real though unavowed cause I believe to have been the growth of the Athenian power, which terrified the Lacedaemonians (Spartans) and forced them into war. . . ."<sup>6</sup>

When the Peloponnesian War broke out in 431 B.C., Athens possessed a strong empire, an unrivaled navy, and a rich treasury. Against her power Sparta and Corinth mustered a strong army, which invaded and pillaged the plain around Athens. The allies of Sparta remained true to her not out of love but from hatred and distrust of Athenian imperialism, while the subject states of Athens were ready at times to revolt. Despite her strong position Athens lost the bitter struggle for a number of reasons. In 429 the city was crowded with refugees. There was a lack of sanitary measures, and a plague brought in from the orient carried off a third of the population. "The dead lay as they had died, one upon another, while others hardly alive wallowed in the streets and crawled about every fountain craving for water."<sup>7</sup> Lawlessness and terror seized the citizens. In 429 Pericles himself died a victim of the plague. Politicians now fought for control, with Cleon the tanner gaining power until his death in 422 B.C., when another leader arranged a peace.

But Athens herself broke the truce and, exhausted physically and economically after a plague and ten years' war, now entered into the final stages of a war which was to ruin her completely. Trying to destroy Corinth's rich western trade, the Athenians embarked upon a disastrous expedition to capture Syracuse in Sicily in 415 B.C. The expedition was a fiasco. By 413 two great fleets and a huge army of 40,000 men had been destroyed. What few survivors remained were sold into slavery by the Syracusans. Well might Thucydides observe that the Athenian "fleet and army perished from the face of the earth; nothing was saved, and of the many that went forth few returned home."<sup>8</sup>

With the failure at Syracuse came more disasters. Finances were at a low ebb. Despite some temporary military successes by the brilliant Alcibiades, the last Athenian fleet was captured in 405 B.C., and in the following year Athens was forced to capitulate. The long walls were torn down, all but twelve ships were given to Sparta, all foreign possessions were taken away, and Athens was made to become a subject ally of Sparta.

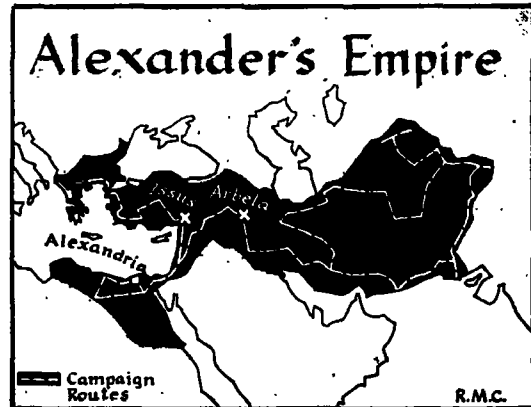
But the rule of Sparta was short-lived. The next fifty years saw the constant clash of city-states and the manipulations of Persia to gain control of Asia Minor. The city-state of Thebes

triumphed temporarily in 371 B.C. through a victory over Sparta. But Theban power collapsed by 362 B.C., and the final chapter was soon written to the political history of the Hellenic world.

**Philip of Macedon.** To the north of Greece lay Macedon, a region inhabited by hardy peasants and fighters who spoke an Indo-European dialect but were culturally inferior to their southern cousins. Under Philip II, who had secured a Greek education and ascended their throne in 359 B.C., the Macedonians began to advance rapidly. Philip was a master strategist. He created a permanent infantry which deployed eight men deep—the famous *phalanx* formation. After uniting Macedon, Philip turned his attention to the disunited Greek city-states, defeating the Athenians and Thebans in 338 B.C. The following year he founded the Hellenic League consisting of all the states in Greece except Sparta, which refused to become a member. The league members were allowed to retain self-government. Philip was head of the league, and it was his intention thus to unite the forces of Greece and Macedon in waging war against Persia. In 336 B.C., however, Philip was assassinated, and the rule of the league fell to his gifted twenty-year-old son, Alexander.

**Alexander the Great.** The youth Alexander, educated under the tutorship of Aristotle himself, was alive to the glories of Hellenic culture and, reveling in the heroic deeds of the *Iliad*, determined to spread Greek civilization throughout the world. Having stamped out rebellion at home, he set out in 334 B.C. at the head of an army of 35,000 soldiers to conquer the despotisms of the orient. In quick succession Alexander conquered Asia Minor, Syria, Palestine, and Egypt, where he founded the city of Alexandria, destined to become the capital of the Hellenistic world. Then he turned eastward, marching over the Fertile Crescent, and near the ruined city of Nineveh defeated the overwhelmingly larger forces of the Persian Darius III at the battle of Arbela in 331 B.C. Within a few days Alexander entered the ancient city of Babylon in triumph. He was now master of a proud empire that had once held sway over the entire Near East but had nevertheless been unable to conquer a small, stubborn band of hostile Greek cities.

Alexander now campaigned from 330 to 324



B.C. in the Far East, venturing as far as the rich valleys of the Ganges in India before his travel-weary army forced him to turn back from world dominion. Though he was not given the opportunity of conquering India, the Hellenic culture which he introduced there later influenced the art of that country. Alexander's journey was therefore not without effect.

In 323 B.C. the youthful monarch, who had made himself master wherever he marched, who never had to taste the gall of defeat in battle, and who was still planning new conquests in the western Mediterranean, died at the age of thirty-three at Babylon, the victim of fever and excessive drinking. This phenomenal young man has staggered the world with the daring of his actions and the scope of his imagination. Although his unprecedented successes were due in no small measure to the great military machine which his father had created and to the disorganized internal conditions of the crumbling Persian empire, Alexander himself was a master at military pursuits. Had he lived longer, his empire might still have perished like those which he himself destroyed.

One of Alexander's most important legacies to later political thought was the theory of divine kingship. He saw in such a philosophy the sanctification of royal policies and commands. As we shall see later, the theory of divine kingship occurs again and again in history.

**Hellenistic history.** Alexander died leaving no heir to inherit his vast empire. A struggle for power among his generals was therefore inevitable. By 275 B.C. the empire was roughly divided into three parts: Macedon and Greece,



*Music and poetry (note the four lyres and the flute) seem to be the principal subjects taught in this Greek academy. The figures in this painting on the Duris vase are red.*

court from which doors led off to living rooms. It had no chimney and no plumbing arrangements of any kind, and the floor was of hard-packed dirt. The furniture, bronze utensils, and pottery, however, were beautifully fashioned. The narrow, crooked streets of Athens were heaped with refuse.

The men dressed in white robes which they draped gracefully over their shoulders. The women preferred brighter and more ostentatious robes, poor compensation for the barren lives which they had to lead in Athens, for this was a culture in which men had education, political and economic power, and social prestige. The democratic processes demanded active citizen participation, and an Athenian did not try to evade jury service or escape attending the assembly or council meetings. During his leisure hours he might exercise, walk with friends, or, on festivals, attend athletic games or the latest comedy or tragedy at the theater. Again, if so inclined, he might drop into a gambling house or seek the company of some courtesan—often an intellectually gifted woman. Sometimes the Athenian men participated in large banquets where discussions (known as *symposia*) were held on subjects relating to politics, metaphysics, art, or philosophy. Thus the intellectual atmosphere of Periclean Athens was stimulating and urbane.<sup>9</sup>

The skilled craftsmen also had opportunities to meet and discuss civic affairs, but the

unskilled laborers had to work long hours and possessed a low social status. Nevertheless, arrangements were always made so that they could attend festivals. The lot of the slaves varied. Those in wealthy homes were often treated like members of the family, but those in the silver mines were chained in gangs and subjected to hard labor.

The Athens of the Periclean age is renowned because of its literary, artistic, and philosophical contributions. "For we are lovers of the beautiful, yet simple in our tastes, and we cultivate the mind without loss of manliness," wrote Pericles. "Wealth we employ, not for talk and ostentation, but when there is a real use for it. To avow poverty with us is no disgrace; the true disgrace is in doing nothing to avoid it. An Athenian citizen does not neglect the state because he takes care of his own household; and even those of us who are engaged in business have a very fair idea of politics."<sup>10</sup>

High above the dusty, tortuous streets and unpretentious brick houses of the lower town rose the great temples and public buildings which crowned the Acropolis. Here stood the visible symbols of Athenian learning and democracy. The Acropolis is about a thousand feet in length and was adorned principally with great temples, built during the office of Pericles. The Athenians lived quite frugally as individuals yet spared no expense in cre-

ating their temples. Here, under the direction of Phidias the sculptor and Ictinus the architect, arose such masterpieces as the Parthenon and the ivory and gold statue of Athena. So strong was the reverence felt by the average Greek for both his city-state and the gods who were the patrons of the city-state that his patriotism was itself a religious mood. Consequently many of the finest Greek public buildings were temples rather than government offices.

***Decline of the Greek city-states.*** The Peloponnesian War ruined the power of Athens, and its social and economic decline was inevitable. The Athenian treasury was depleted by the end of the long-drawn-out war, nor could it be replenished once the Athenian empire had been smashed. The war also resulted in the loss of much of the once prosperous trade between Athens and scores of other Greek cities, a loss which impoverished the Athenians, who depended upon commerce for their livelihood.

By the time the war was ended, all the Greek cities had declined socially and economically. Even the victor, Sparta, was little better off than the vanquished. Sparta received silver from its new Aegean allies, but the money was too often embezzled by private citizens. No longer were the Spartan virtues of frugality and simplicity practiced. Luxury became prevalent among the idle rich, while the poverty of the poor became more marked in contrast. The Spartans had always lacked the cultural attainments of the Athenians, but once they had at least possessed strength of body and will. Now they engaged in intemperate pursuits, bought expensive clothes, ate costly foods, and spent much of their time in such idle pastimes as raising racehorses for the chariot events at the Olympic games.

The Athenian countryside had been harried all through the war, so that the soil lost much of its former fertility. The terrible loss of life among the citizens and the desertion of 20,000 slaves to the enemy depopulated Athens for a considerable time. The cost of living nearly doubled. Yet Athens continued to be the business center of the Aegean, and the lot of her workmen was still much better than that of other cities. Money for taxes was advanced by wealthy men who then collected what they could from the people. Despite the surface indications of prosperity and even lux-

ury, the financial status of Athens, and indeed all Greek city-states, was unhealthy.

***The Hellenistic world.*** During the Hellenistic age (about 337-146 B.C.) Athens and Corinth were completely eclipsed in power by the cities of Alexandria and Antioch. Alexandria was a metropolis at least three times as large as Athens in her palmiest days. Alexandria had wide streets and boulevards laid out in regular fashion, private dwellings built of stone masonry, a famous lighthouse 370 feet high, beautiful public buildings to house governmental offices amid splendid parks and gardens containing tropical plants and sculptured monuments, gymnasiums, baths, concert halls, stadiums, a royal museum, and a great library that contained approximately 750,000 volumes. The streets were filled with a mixture of peoples—Greeks, Macedonians, Egyptians, Semites, Persians, and other nationalities. A modified form of Greek was spoken officially in the Hellenistic world, and a cosmopolitanism based on Greek culture was the keynote of Hellenistic life.

The culture which centered in Alexandria and Antioch was by no means inferior to that of Athens. The Hellenistic world contained many of the best elements of the Hellenic, together with those elements—especially science—in which the Near East excelled but which were lacking in Greece. All the existing arts, sciences, and speculations of the human mind could be found in Alexandria, and her streets were filled with as many famous figures as climbed the steps of the Acropolis during the age of Pericles. It was largely from the Hellenistic world that the Romans learned of the cultural and intellectual wealth of the past.

The Hellenistic world grew wealthy from the trade which streamed from India to the Persian Gulf, up the Tigris and over the Fertile Crescent to Damascus and Antioch, or south through Arabia to Alexandria. In the third century the center of trade shifted from Greece to Egypt, Rhodes, and the coast of Asia Minor. Alexandria imported timber, metals, wools, marble, wines, spices, and horses, while her exports were even larger than her imports. She controlled the export of grain, supplied the world with linen and much of its wool, enjoyed a large trade in paper (papyrus) and glass, and was a center for such luxury goods as gold and silver jewelry and oriental spices.



From India came cinnamon, cassia, and spike-nard; from Arabia came frankincense (important in the religious rites of the Greeks, Jews, and others) and myrrh. Wherever the soldiers of Alexander had marched, Greek, Arab, and Phoenician traders could be seen, while in the second century B.C. even the merchants of Rome began to buy and sell in the Hellenistic world.

**Social discontent.** Despite the wealth of such cities as Alexandria and Antioch, there was much discontent because of the excessive social and economic differences which existed between the rich and poor. The Hellenistic world was despotic where the Athenians had been democratic, and the serfdom and poverty of a great part of the population were due to oriental rather than Greek influences. Un-

questionably one of the worst features in the Hellenistic world was the manner in which the common laborers were exploited and pauperized. The despotism of the government allowed political power, lands, money, and trading privileges to fall into the hands of the favorites of the rulers.

In the Hellenistic cities a large percentage of the people had no political rights and no economic security and, in fact, lived in a state bordering on starvation. For these reasons various cities were obliged to furnish the unemployed with cheap or free grain to keep them from revolting, a practice later resorted to in Rome. The concentration of wealth in a few hands was a problem which the Hellenistic world appeared unable to solve—a problem which has troubled many ages.

### *Greek Intellectual and Scientific Contributions*

**Greek cultural legacy.** While we possess today inventions and scientific discoveries which the Hellenic and Hellenistic peoples never knew, our own age is largely the result of their intellectual independence and speculation. In philosophy, science, and political thought the Greeks broke with the traditions of the orient. Free to think for themselves, unshackled by a powerful priestly class, and moved by a burning desire for the truth, they transmitted to us the highest ideals in philosophy and science; they taught us by their own example that learning comes only with intellectual honesty and complete tolerance.

**Greek religion.** The Greek religion in primitive times was animistic, with each region possessing friendly and hostile spirits. Later the spirits became gods and goddesses, chief of whom was Zeus, the king of sky, earth, vegetation, animals, and men. Zeus dwelled with the lesser gods on Mount Olympus and with their aid directed the world. Apollo was the sun god. Athena, the daughter of Zeus, was the special protectress of Athens and the goddess of wisdom; Demeter was the Earth Mother, who was responsible for the earth's fertility. Dionysus was responsible for the grapevine (and hence wine). Hermes, the messenger of the gods, looked after trade and commerce, and Aphrodite was the goddess of love.

The gods were not perfect according to the Greeks. On the contrary, they possessed many of the same limitations as human beings—

malice, jealousy, ambition, and intemperance. But they did possess one characteristic which was denied human beings—immortality. Later, however, some Greeks came to believe that the gods could not logically lead evil lives. They came to think, furthermore, that there must be a reckoning in a life after death for all mortals. Nevertheless, the Greeks had few clear-cut ideas on immortality. Hades, the realm of the dead, was a joyless region of shadows. The Elysian Fields—part of Hades—were the abode of heroes and philosophers. Evildoers were consigned for punishment to Tartarus, an infernal region far below Hades.

Oracles and mystery schools were prominent in Greek religion. The most famous oracle was at Delphi, where the wishes of Apollo were supposed to be made known to all Greeks. Other means of ascertaining the divine will were omens, such as came from watching the flight of birds, or from divination, a custom borrowed from the Babylonians in which the inner parts of a sacrificed animal were examined for signs. Divination was practiced before every important Greek battle, a custom followed later among the Romans. Throughout the entire classical world, these forms of superstition were common except among a relatively few educated men.

The educated people practiced a more refined religion. Stories had come down from the most primitive days concerning the worship of the fertility of nature and the recurring

cycles of life and death in the changing seasons. All the tales told of a god who died and rose again in an endless cycle. If nature died in the winter and was reborn in the spring, it was not impossible, they thought, that when man died he too was born in another body. These beliefs and the rites which the believers practiced were called mystery schools.

All Greek religion centered about nature and the evolution of life toward a goal of perfection. The Greeks were not much interested in problems of morality and sin. To them the ideal life was one based on harmony and social cooperation. The religion of the Greeks went hand in hand with art. That the gods proved an unending inspiration to the Hellenic sculptors, the many statues of Zeus, Apollo, Demeter, Aphrodite, and other popular deities amply demonstrate.

**Philosophy.** The freedom of thought which the Greeks enjoyed made possible the first development of philosophy in the west. What is philosophy? The Greeks said that it is the attempt of men to find out what is *real*. It might also be said that science has the same goal. But where the scientist is primarily interested in ascertaining exact knowledge of the laws that govern natural events, the philosopher attempts to go still further and find out the *whys and wherefores* of the natural laws. When science with its instruments comes to a place beyond which it cannot reach, philosophy is still concerned with the search for reality by means of deductive reasoning and speculation. As B. A. G. Fuller puts it, "Philosophy, then, may be defined as a deliberate attempt to pry into the private affairs of the life of the universe, and to figure out from the face of things what they are like at heart."<sup>11</sup>

The philosopher's quest after reality can be divided into various categories. The attempt to explain the nature and purpose of the universe is called *cosmology*. The investigation of the limits and validity of human knowledge is called *epistemology*. The study of the principles which govern correct and accurate thinking is known as *logic*. The study of the problems of correct human behavior is *ethics*. The philosophy of the principles underlying beauty is called *aesthetics*.

**Milesian theories of "earth-substance."** Early in the sixth century B.C., in the cultured Ionian city of Miletus on the coast of Asia Minor, men began to speculate about the physical

construction of the universe. Here, then, were born both philosophy and science. It was natural that the first western philosophers should concern themselves with cosmology, since explanation of the universe is a foremost desire of many men.

"The Father of Philosophy" is the title given to a statesman of Miletus named Thales. A traveler who had learned from the Babylonians the secret of calculating eclipses, Thales came to the conclusion that eclipses and other phenomena in the skies were not the result of the whims of the gods but of definite, natural, fixed laws. Thales tried to find the basic substance from which all else in the universe is composed and came to the belief that it was water. We can only guess why water appeared to Thales to be all-inclusive. Water has the mobility which seems necessary for purposes of transformation. Water exists in more than one state; it can solidify into ice or become steam or mist. Life cannot function without water, and as water is essential to growth, Thales could well reason that he had struck upon the basic substance of the universe. That we disagree with him today is quite unimportant to our discussion; the important point is that Thales was the first western philosopher to try to explain life in terms of naturalistic causes.

Another of the nature philosophers at Miletus was Anaximander. Although a student of Thales, he disagreed with his teacher regarding the ultimate substance. Being conscious of the great complexity of life, Anaximander concluded that the basic substance must be a Boundless Something which could not be specified.

A third member of the Milesian school was Anaximenes. His conclusion was a compromise between those of Thales and Anaximander. While admitting that water was not pliable enough to create everything, Anaximenes felt that the Boundless Something of Anaximander was too vague and elusive an answer. So he compromised by maintaining that the world-stuff was Vapor or Air. Anaximenes saw that all animate things inhaled air and exhaled breath which was moist. We still use the expression "breath of life" in keeping with Anaximenes' theory. With the passing of Anaximenes, the Milesian school came to an end, but it continued to influence subsequent Greek thought.

**The Pythagoreans.** A new development now took place in Greek philosophy. About 532 B.C. a thinker named Pythagoras (born about 582 B.C.) settled in southern Italy. There he founded a religious community, which was much influenced by the mystery schools. The Pythagoreans believed in the doctrine of reincarnation and practiced rites calculated to purify the soul and win ultimate freedom from all earthly bondage.

The followers of this school of thought made important discoveries in music and geometry besides contributing to philosophy. The Pythagorean proposition in geometry is known (presumably) by every schoolboy. Later the Pythagoreans believed that all things are really numbers. Thus, "to get its number" was to obtain the principal characteristics of an object. The Pythagoreans went so far as to state, for example, that justice is a square number, opportunity is the number seven, and marriage the number five, the sum of man (odd) and woman (even). In music Pythagoras discovered by experimenting with a vibrating cord that musical harmony is based on arithmetical proportions.

**The problem of change.** By the beginning of the fifth century Greek philosophy was flourishing. Men were now more sophisticated, and they criticized the views of the Milesians. Water, they decided, could not change into a multitude of things absolutely unlike water in every way. The problem of change thus came to the fore. One philosopher, Parmenides (born about 475 B.C.), maintained through very skillful reasoning that Existence, or Being, alone is real. Furthermore, it is impossible for Being to be anything but eternal, immutable, immovable, and indivisible. Hence movement, change, variety, and multiplicity are logically impossible and do not really exist. They are simply illusions of our minds.

One whose ideas diametrically opposed the philosophy of Parmenides was the brilliant Heraclitus (about 540-475 B.C.). In Heraclitus' view life is change and change alone. The entire universe is in flux; life is forever "on the go." In his own words, "You cannot step twice into the same rivers; for fresh waters are ever flowing in upon you."<sup>12</sup> Our bodies and minds are always changing, and it is impossible to show just when youth becomes old age. Life to Heraclitus is a constant transition. "Every-

thing changes except change." Heraclitus was the first to expound the doctrine of relativity, an important doctrine in modern mathematical, scientific, and philosophical theories.

**Theories of multiple earth-substances.** Thinkers now saw the difficulty of trying to explain the universe in terms of one substance. Some of them therefore substituted a plurality of units. The first great philosopher to take up the new attitude was Empedocles (490?-430? B.C.). Empedocles said that the universe was composed of earth, water, fire, and air. He also conceived of the evolution first of vegetable and then of animal life. Although some of his views concerning organic evolution were fantastic, Empedocles thought that animal species are produced by a process of natural selection in which environment plays an important role.

The thinker Anaxagoras (500?-428? B.C.) lived in Athens a large part of his life as the friend of Pericles, although he was born in Ionia. He scrapped the four-element theory of Empedocles and substituted an indefinite variety of qualities, such as hot and cold, sweet and bitter, and black and white.

**Democritus' atomic theory.** The logical climax to the search after universal elements came with a later nature philosopher, Democritus (460?-370? B.C.). He held that the universe is made up of atoms which are invisible to the eye and differ with each other, not in quality, but in quantity only—shape, size, position, and arrangement. Thus all atoms are the same in essence, but the fire atoms, for example, are the smallest, smoothest, and most active of all; hence they are the atoms which make up the mind. The atoms move about continuously, and they combine to create objects. The separation of the atoms results in the death of the object. Reality to Democritus is the mechanical motion of the atoms. The mechanical atomic theory is the one which modern scientists have used to the present day, although the atom is no longer seen to be indivisible and indestructible.

**Human problems succeed cosmology.** To this point we have seen the following developments in Greek philosophy: (1) the growth of cosmologies and the attempt to discover the principal universal element, (2) the gradual realization that the changes in the universe could not be explained by any one "world-stuff," (3) the conflicting views (a) that these

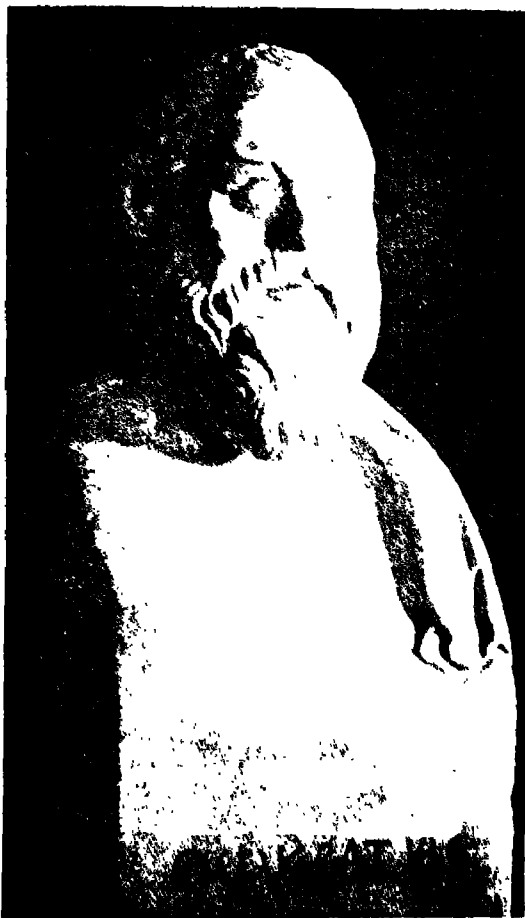
changes were brought about by change or motion, and (b) that the belief in the variety of objects was an illusion, and (4) the eventual compromise that there was no single universal element but a multitude of indivisible atoms, each incapable of internal change but each possessing movement through which variety was made possible.

The Greeks with their limited knowledge of natural science had gone as far as they could in trying to solve the riddle of the universe. But there was another riddle which remained for solution—man. Certain Greek philosophers interested themselves in problems of ethics, logic, and knowledge.

**The Sophists.** In the middle of the fifth century there arose a school of thought called the Sophists. The Sophists were primarily teachers of rhetoric, "the art of persuasion," and they taught the rich youth of Athens how to "win friends and influence people." The Sophists were both a good and bad influence. Insofar as they trained their pupils in grammar, logic, history, and politics, they aided higher education. But because some of them taught cleverness rather than truth and showed their students how to argue on any side of a question simply to win at all costs and by any method, the school received a poor reputation. Today the word "sophistry" has connotations which are not flattering.

**Socrates.** Because of their originality and their faults, the Sophists created a strong reaction against their teachings. Their outstanding opponent was Socrates (469?-399 B.C.), the most lovable character in all Greek philosophy. He was the first Athenian-born philosopher, the son of a sculptor and a midwife. Socrates was a brave soldier during the Peloponnesian War; later he died a martyr to his convictions. He was ugly, having protruding eyes, thick lips, and a snub nose, but his conversational magic must have made him the most fascinating of companions. For that reason, together with his profound insight into the problems of human nature, fashionable youths were proud to be seen debating with the threadbare philosopher who wore no shoes from one year's end to the next.

Socrates differed with the Sophists, for he believed that there actually exist universal ideas and standards, such as absolute beauty and goodness. While they may seem difficult to obtain, yet if such methods as analysis, com-



*A statue of Socrates (Vatican museum, Rome) is from all accounts a good likeness of the great man.*

parison, dialectic, and synthesis are applied to any situation, points of agreement gradually emerge from which common standards can be taken. Universal virtues and rules can be found if man searches after knowledge. Socrates linked *virtue* and *knowledge* together. He took as his own motto the famous inscription on the temple of Apollo at Delphi, "Know thyself."

His tireless quest after truth made later ages revere him, even as it made his own generation suspect him of corrupting the Athenian youth and carrying on political intrigue. He was condemned to die, and although he had ample chance to escape his execution, Socrates preferred to remain in his Athenian prison, maintaining that no citizen should disobey even an unjust law.

We are indebted to Plato for our account of the death of Socrates, a description so simply and sincerely written that it cannot fail to move the reader. Socrates was the only one who did not weep. He gently talked with his jailer, calmly drank the poisonous draught of hemlock, and reproved his friends for their show of emotion, saying "What are you doing, my admirable friends? I indeed, for this reason chiefly, sent away the women that they might not commit any folly of this kind. For I have heard that it is right to die with good omens. Be quiet, therefore, and bear up." "Such," concludes Plato, "was the end of our friend, whom I may truly call the wisest, and justest, and best of all men whom I have ever known."<sup>13</sup>

**Plato (427?-347? B.C.).** Plato was the greatest of Socrates' many disciples. Born in Athens of aristocratic parents, he received an excellent education and is said to have been proficient at athletics, music, painting, poetry, and drama. With the death of Socrates, Plato found Athens unsafe and left the city for some ten years, traveling to Syracuse in Sicily among other places. When about forty years old, Plato returned to Athens and founded a famous school called the Academy. It lasted almost nine centuries until it and other schools were closed by order of the Roman emperor Justinian (529 A.D.). Many prominent youths were educated in the Academy, including the genius Aristotle, who came there when he was eighteen. For about twenty years Plato presided over his school.

His philosophy centers about his famous "Theory of Ideas." Like Socrates, Plato believed that truth exists and, furthermore, that truth is eternal and fixed. Yet Plato saw that nothing is permanent in the world of physical senses. Therefore permanence can be found only in the realm of thought, of Ideas or Forms. In this other world are certain universal, eternal, and fixed Ideas, such as perfect Beauty, Justice, and Truth. The greatest of all Ideas is the Good. Now many of us believe that an Idea exists only in the human mind, but to Plato it had a real existence apart from our intellects. Furthermore, he believed, our concepts of justice, beauty, or truth in the world of the senses are only reflections, very imperfect reflections, of the eternal and changeless Ideas. The world of Ideas is spiritual and not physical, and be-

cause man's soul is linked to the spiritual "Ideal" world, it follows that the human soul is also spiritual and immortal.

Plato had set forth the "Ideal" life for the individual; he now taught his concepts of an ideal state. His *Republic* is the first systematic treatise on political science and on the first Utopia, or ideal human society. Plato's state is founded on the idea of Justice, the essence of which is order. The state's function is to satisfy the common good.

The perfect state must not be too large nor too wealthy. On the other hand, there must not be too much poverty, or discontent will result. There should be three classes of society: the workers, who provide the necessities of life, the warriors, who guard the state "as the Spartans," and the philosophers, who rule in the best interests of all the people. Education plays a very important role in the governing of the state. First of all, marriage shall be controlled by the state in order that children may be produced eugenically. The education of the children must be strictly regulated so that the future philosopher-kings will be fit to govern the state properly. Private property is abolished, as is the family, for those institutions breed selfishness.

Plato's society was a "spiritualized Sparta," with the people living under the paternal control of the rulers just as the *helots* were controlled by the Spartans. Personal liberty was completely subordinated to the interests of the state, and even such matters as drama, music, poetry, and all amusements were to be strictly regulated. Despite many serious defects, Plato's *Republic* is important because it represents the first attempts to conceive of a planned social order involving such "modern" ideas as a division of labor and eugenics.

**Aristotle.** Plato's greatest pupil was Aristotle (384-322 B.C.). But whereas Plato had followed the views of his master Socrates, Aristotle differed quite radically from Plato. Born in Thrace, Aristotle at eighteen journeyed to Athens to enter Plato's Academy and remained a member of it for eighteen years. Shortly after his master's death, he was asked by Philip of Macedon to help educate young Alexander. This he did for four years, but the accession of Alexander to the Macedonian throne in 336 B.C. left the philosopher free to act as he wished. So Aristotle returned to Athens, where he set up a school of his own called the

Lyceum. He would walk up and down while lecturing to his pupils, and thus the group came to be called "Peripatetic" (Greek *peripatos*, walk), a term afterward applied to the Aristotelian system. In the morning Aristotle lectured to his advanced pupils; the afternoons he gave over to more popular classes in oratory and rhetoric.

At the same time Aristotle carried on his own private studies, subsidized probably by Alexander; and in the few years before his death he accomplished so much that it staggers the imagination. He investigated all known fields of knowledge, and his fertile brain mapped out many new fields such as biology. He wrote brilliantly on mathematics, physics, astronomy, biology, physiology, anatomy, botany, natural history, psychology, politics, ethics, logic, rhetoric, art, theology, and metaphysics. In all the history of the human race there has probably never been another brain so encyclopedic as Aristotle's.

**Aristotle's *Metaphysics*.** In his *Metaphysics*, Aristotle differed from Plato on the question of Ideas. Real Being for Aristotle was found not in universal Ideas but in the particular, the individual, and the concrete. Furthermore, every concrete object is composed of Form and Matter. Thus Form makes John Smith a human being and not a cat, while Matter makes him John Smith and not any other human being. Form and Matter cannot be separated from one another, says Aristotle, though Plato separated his Ideal Forms from Matter.

**His systems of ethics and logic.** Two of Aristotle's greatest contributions were his treatises on ethics and logic. He said that the function of man is to live in conformity with reason and that happiness comes from an unobstructed pursuit of a rational life. The highest happiness comes from philosophical speculation. However, Aristotle was very practical. He realized that normal human desires should not be repressed, stressed the virtue of moderation, and warned against excess in any form. Too little food or too much food is harmful, as is too little or too much exercise. Likewise, the excesses of the ascetic are little better than the excesses of the intemperate and dissolute.

Aristotle is famous for having developed deductive reasoning. His doctrine of the syllogism should be remembered. The syllogism, or process of proof, consists of a trio of propositions. The first two propositions (the major

and minor premises) must be logically related and so true that the third proposition, the conclusion, must inevitably follow. For example, (1) Socrates is a man; (2) all men are mortal; (3) therefore, Socrates is mortal. The syllogism is of value in pointing out fallacies in human reasoning, but it is often abused by loose thinkers who make use of incorrect premises or premises which have no logical relationship to each other.

**Political theories.** Aristotle was very much interested in politics, maintaining that man is a political being who achieves the fullest life only with other individuals. He complained against Plato's *Republic* and said that both property and family life were valuable incentives. Because democracy had degenerated during his lifetime in Greece, Aristotle favored the rule of a single strong man. He also favored slavery, for he thought that some men by nature are fit only to wait upon their biological superiors. His political views are scarcely practical today, for he had no concept of the present national state system and wrote only about the small *polis* of his own age.

**Science and esthetics.** In biology, however, Aristotle made worth-while scientific contributions. He collected a mass of original data, and from his observations concluded there is an evolutionary process which develops from a simple to a more complex organism and that as the organism grows more complex there is a corresponding increase in intelligence.

He did not even have a microscope to help him. But because he made such discoveries as the similarity in structure between birds and reptiles and showed that the monkey is in form an intermediate between quadrupeds and man, Aristotle has been called the Father of Biology. And because of novel experiments regarding the development of the chick in the egg, he must be credited with beginning the science of embryology.

This encyclopedic writer also pondered on esthetics. Where Plato condemned poetry, Aristotle saw the value of the artist, poet, and dramatist as a means of sublimating or refining human passions. His theory of Unity of Action remains today a true standard for the construction and criticism of the drama. For at least fifteen centuries after his death, Aristotle was considered the final authority upon nearly every subject about which he had written.

**Philosophy in troubled times.** Aristotle marks the transition from Hellenic to Hellenistic culture. With his death there came a decline in philosophy in Greece, owing largely to the decay of political and social ideals. The city-states were full of internal disorder, and they had just been subjugated by the Macedonians. No longer was there any incentive for men to look for the ideal life in an ideal society, as Plato had done in the *Republic*. Rather there was a cry for some sort of guide to enable men to live a practical, everyday life in a world that had lost its moral bearings. The situation was akin to that in the China of the Chou dynasty, a China broken up into warring states with political disorder everywhere and such philosophers as Lao-tse and Confucius seeking methods whereby men could still live fruitfully and happily. Here, in civilizations as geographically remote as China and Greece, are examples of the effect of man's political environment upon his philosophy of life.

Three major schools arose in Greece in an effort to satisfy the new quest: Epicureanism, Stoicism, and Skepticism. The first two especially proved exceedingly popular, not only among the Greeks, but among their Roman conquerors.

**Epicureanism.** The founder of the first school was Epicurus (342?-270 B.C.), an Athenian who taught that the highest good was pleasure of the body and mind. According to him there was no afterlife; therefore men did not have to live in fear of the gods. Yet Epicurus maintained that the finest pleasures were intellectual, and he himself led a simple existence. Because some of his later followers debased his teachings into the pursuit of sensual rather than intellectual pleasures, we associate with the school the old oriental proverb, "Eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow we die." We also call a man with refined tastes in eating an epicure.

**Stoicism.** In opposition to the easy-going philosophy of the Epicureans was that of Zeno of Cyprus (336?-264? B.C.), who taught in the Athenian market place in the Painted Porch, called a *stoa*—hence the name Stoicism to describe the school of Zeno. To Zeno there was but one aim in the world, freedom from the desires of life. To be tranquil of soul and to be indifferent both to pain and pleasure, joy and sorrow were the ideal virtues to the Stoics.

The wise man is he who lives only by reason and despises the emotions; wise is he also who seeks after no pleasures or fame. Of the two philosophies, Stoicism unquestionably secured a more respectable following than did Epicureanism, especially when the latter degenerated at the hands of its pleasure-loving devotees.

**Skepticism.** There was a third school, however, which most clearly shows the temper of the age of doubt and misgiving—Skepticism. Such men as Pyrrho (365-275 B.C.) believed that nothing can ever be known outside the field of the physical senses. Furthermore, these senses do not agree: Pleasure for one is pain for another; one person feels cold when another feels warm, and so on. Pyrrho showed that the previous philosophers had not been able to agree upon the most simple problem because everything goes back to personal beliefs about which no one can argue. Who is to say, then, what is truth? Obviously, no one. Therefore a wise man does not pretend to hold any opinions but simply follows the customs and traditions of the place in which he happens to live. The skeptic's philosophy was definitely negative in character.

**Popularity of oriental cults.** Meanwhile, because so many men in any age do not live by philosophy but prefer the warmer emotional climate of religion, most of the people living in the Hellenistic world turned to various faiths for consolation. When the old Greek gods became discredited, religious cults from the east became exceedingly popular. The Ptolemies introduced a new state god called Serapis, while from Babylonia came the lore of the Chaldean astrologers.

**Greek science.** Philosophy was one of the glories of Greek culture; another was science. Although the principal Greek scientists lived in Hellenistic times, the Hellenic world was not without its investigators, especially in medicine. The Greeks rejected the superstition that disease was caused by hostile deities and sought instead a natural explanation. There appears to have been a medical school in Ionia.

The Father of Medicine was Hippocrates (460?-357? B.C.). We know little of his life, but we can realize his tremendous effect upon the course of medical practice. He believed wholly in the inductive method, that is, he based his conclusions upon the actual observa-

tions and experiments which he made. Although he believed that the body was composed of the four elements earth, fire, water, and air and contained four body fluids, blood, phlegm, yellow bile, and black bile, and knew next to nothing about the nervous system, he had a good knowledge of the bones and muscles. He understood the effect of climate upon health, appreciated the value of nature as a healing agent, and set up the standards of conduct which he believed all physicians ought to employ in dealing with their patients. So high were his professional ideals that today all doctors still swear to practice according to the Hippocratic Oath.

**Hellenistic scientists.** Only in the last three centuries have men advanced as far in scientific exploration as did the thinkers of the Hellenistic world. The most outstanding scientist of the age was Archimedes of Syracuse (287?-212 B.C.). A great mathematician, astronomer, and engineer, he wrote many monographs upon a variety of subjects. The stories about him are well known—how he discovered specific gravity by noticing the water he displaced while taking a bath, and forthwith jumped out and ran home naked, shouting, "Eureka! I have found it!" and how he so perfected a system of pulleys and levers for launching a great ship that he is said to have made the remark, "Give me a place to stand on, and I will move the earth."

He contributed to higher mathematics by calculating the limits for the value of  $\pi$ , invented a terminology for expressing numbers up to any magnitude, and laid the foundations of calculus of the infinite. In physics he excelled above all else. He made practical use of his discoveries by inventing a compound pulley, the windlass, an endless screw for pumping out ships and draining fields after the Nile's floods, a planetarium worked by water which depicted the motions of the heavens, and such military weapons as catapults, burning-glasses, and grapnels, with which he is said to have kept the Romans for three years from capturing his native city of Syracuse.

The most famous mathematician of Alexandria was Euclid (about 300 B.C.), whose textbook on plane geometry is still used in the schools of England and America. Another famous mathematician was Apollonius, who has been credited with the first systematic use



*A man cured of foot disease dedicates a model of his leg to Aesculapius, god of healing.*

of trigonometry. Men were quick to apply these advances to the related sciences of astronomy and geography. The Ptolemies had erected an observatory at Alexandria, and although it possessed no telescopes, it was the center of much valuable astronomical activity. Aristarchus (about 284-264 B.C.) showed that the sun must be far larger than the earth, some 300 times, he believed. He proved further that the earth rotates on its axis and moves in an orbit around the sun, but few people accepted his radical discovery. The majority of Hellenistic scientists espoused the geocentric theory—that the earth was stationary and the sun revolved around it. This mistaken notion was later expanded and given definite form by the last of the great classical scientists, Ptolemy, who lived in Alexandria in the second century A.D. This influential astronomer and geographer wrote a summa-



tion of Hellenistic astronomical views in his *Almagest*, or *Great System of Astronomy*, which championed the geocentric theory. Ptolemy's views were generally accepted by western Europe in the sixteenth century until Copernicus proved Aristarchus right.

Another Hellenistic astronomer worthy of mention is Hipparchus (160?-125? B.C.). His calculation of the length of the lunar month (equal on the average to 29.53 days) was less than 1" out, and he catalogued 805 fixed stars. He also made an estimate of the length of the year to within six minutes of the absolute time and invented a satisfactory scheme for computing latitude and longitude.

In geography the most famous name is Eratosthenes of Alexandria (276?-195? B.C.), the founder of scientific geography, who was also noted for his knowledge of mathematics and astronomy. His most brilliant computation was the circumference of the earth, which he calculated correctly to within a relatively few miles. His suggestion that one might sail from Spain around Africa to India without mishap was proved in 1497 A.D. by Vasco da Gama. He drew a relatively exact map of the Mediterranean world, marked off with lines of latitude.

*Greek accomplishments and limitations.* We must remember, in estimating the advances made in Greek science, that these people had no real scientific instruments and scarcely ever experimented, except in surgery. Without using our telescope, microscope, or laboratory techniques, the Greek projected his mind into the stretches of time and space in an effort to try, more by philosophy than by physics, to explain the universe. Because he had a natural bent for arriving at conclusions by means of deduction, the science at which the Greek excelled was mathematics.

Despite the seeming inability of the Greeks to make practical, everyday use of what knowledge they had gleaned, we owe them a great debt of gratitude. They made a praiseworthy beginning in most of the sciences we now possess, mathematics, astronomy, and medicine being especially advanced. More than this, the Greeks scrapped the superstitious, pseudo-mystic beliefs with which the orient had swaddled science, and substituted instead a search for truth along naturalistic and mechanistic paths. They divorced astronomy from astrology, medicine from magic and substituted natural law for the whim of the gods.

### *Greek Literary and Artistic Contributions*

**Poetry.** The literature of Greece goes back to the majestic epic poems of Homer, the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. While the authorship of these great poems remains in doubt (though Homer may well have been an historical figure), there is no doubt that in these epics we have some of the world's finest poetry. They were set down in their present form somewhere around the ninth century B.C. The *Iliad* deals with the tenth year of the siege of Troy, the wrath of Achilles, and the death of Hector. The *Odyssey* recounts the exciting adventures of the hero Odysseus (Ulysses) on his journey home from the wars. All scholars are agreed that any translation of Greek poetry must suffer badly; the sound of the language cannot be duplicated. Greek and Sanskrit are related, and both are noted for their structure, beauty, and power. But Homer's artistry is not confined to language. In his ability to describe character, disaster, and human emotion, he shows what true epic poetry can be.

Some time after the reputed lifetime of

Homer there lived another famous poet by the name of Hesiod, who wrote about the ancient religious beliefs of his people, and who has also given us a treatise on agriculture. Homer and Hesiod are of genuine value to the modern historian who wants a contemporary account of early Greek customs.

For the five centuries which elapsed between Homer and the age of Pericles we have only a few fragments of Greek poetry. Two poets, however, are noteworthy. One was Sappho of Lesbos (about 600 B.C.), perhaps the most famous woman poet in history, whose poems of love and tragedy are unrivaled examples of deep passion simply expressed. The other was Pindar of Thebes (522?-433? B.C.), the noted Greek lyric bard. His poems are filled with pomp and the proud life of the nobles with whom he associated. He delighted in describing the tension that comes with the chariot race and the triumph that comes to the victor in the Olympian games. His richness of language and vividness of description

make his lyrics fine reading for anyone in any time.

**The Greek drama.** The literature of Greece reached a splendid climax during the age of Pericles, principally in the drama. The origin of the drama was undoubtedly religious, evolving around the ritualistic worship of Dionysus. A chorus sang and danced a lyrical poem around an altar, while one of the singers recited an episode of the god's life. Later by means of masks and costumes people impersonated various characters of the poem. In the theater of Dionysus on the slope of the Acropolis the performances grew both in complexity and popularity.

**The tragedians.** During the Periclean age the drama reached its height because of the plays of the three outstanding writers of tragedy, Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides. Aeschylus (525-456 B.C.) wrote about eighty plays, but only seven remain. He wrote *The Persians* to commemorate the defeat of Xerxes at Salamis. Perhaps his most famous tragedy is *Agamemnon*, which tells of the death of a Greek hero upon his return from Troy at the hands of the lover of his unfaithful wife. Aeschylus was both a playwright and a philosopher. He used his intense dramatic force to depict such human problems as sin, moral responsibility, and the purpose of existence. It has been said that Aeschylus had the deepest sense of religion of any of the Greek poets and that he had the "instinct to look at the Universe as the soul's battleground."

His successor, Sophocles (about 495-406 B.C.), was less philosophical but technically much more advanced than Aeschylus. Sophocles made superb use of dialogue, suspense, and climax and was a keen portrayer of character. His most famous plays are *Antigone* and *Oedipus Tyrannus*, the latter being perhaps the most powerful character study in all Greek drama. Oedipus belongs to a family that is accursed because it has offended the gods. Bearing out a prophecy, Oedipus murders his father and marries his mother. The curse is laid on his unhappy children as well, for Antigone, his daughter, is buried alive, and his sons slay each other. The tragedy is the more dramatic for its full depiction of the character of Oedipus—his will-power, temper, and courage.

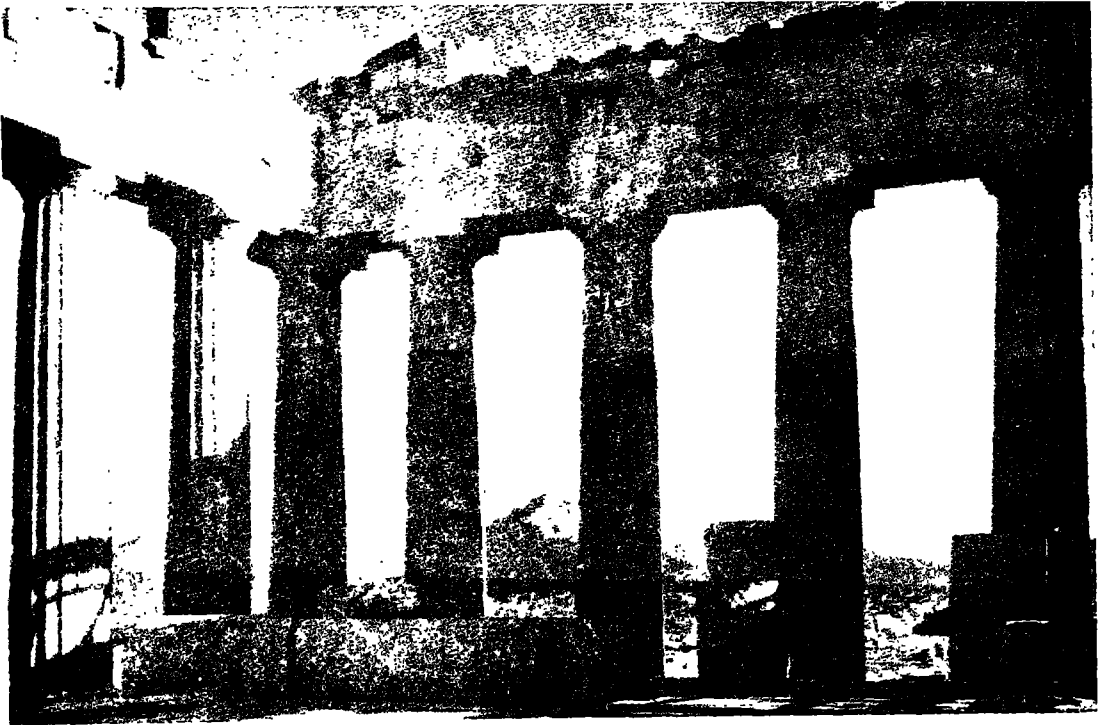
The third playwright was Euripides (480?-406? B.C.), who is remembered through the

preservation of eighteen of the eighty plays he wrote. Added to his cleverness was an unusually keen sense of beauty which made itself apparent in odd situations and events. He used ancient tales (as did his predecessors), but he used them in a different way. Where Aeschylus is highly religious, Euripides rationalizes about the gods. The playwright thus reveals a growing skepticism and critical attitude among Greek thinkers at the close of the fifth century. His most famous plays include *Medea*, *Alcestis*, *Bacchae*, and *Iphigenia among the Taurians*, the latter being one of the few Greek dramas which has a happy ending.

**The comedians.** The brilliant playwright of comedy was Aristophanes (448?-385? B.C.). We possess eleven complete comedies by this master of satire and comic situations. The political institutions and the famous Athenians of Aristophanes' day are made the butt of many a humorous jest. Socrates is satirized in *The Clouds*, Euripides in *The Frogs*, and Athens and the entire human race in *The Birds*. Aristophanes has a vigor characteristic of Shakespeare. But the two men differ in that "Shakespeare is preëminent for magnificent characters, Aristophanes for richly comic situations."<sup>14</sup> Menander (342-291 B.C.) was another Greek dramatist who satirized the customs and manners of the Hellenistic age in Athens. Menander, who differs from Aristophanes in being witty and urbane rather than riotous and explosive, has been referred to as a Greek Molière.

**Greek historians.** The Greeks made a very significant literary contribution in the writing of history. Three Greek historians, Herodotus, Thucydides, and Xenophon are notable. Herodotus of Halicarnassus (484?-425? B.C.) is known as the Father of History. He wrote a *History* of the Persian wars and pointed out the clash of two distinct civilizations, the Hellenic and the oriental. His portrayal of both the Greeks and Persians was very fair, and he emphasized the effect of climate and geography upon social customs. However, Herodotus was often quite inaccurate, because he was so fond of a good story that he would include it in his work whether or not it deserved a place.

Thucydides (460?-400 B.C.) was the first great scientific historian. He was very careful in weighing the value of all historical data,



A CORNER OF THE PARTHENON ON THE ACROPOLIS, SHOWING THE DORIC ORDER

divorcing history from supernaturalism. He wrote about the Peloponnesian War and subordinated his Athenian sympathies entirely in order that he might write an objective account of the conflict.

Xenophon (434<sup>?</sup>-355 B.C.) was a less important historian than his two predecessors, but his *Anabasis*, which recounts the brilliant retreat of ten thousand Greeks from the heart of Persia to the coast of Asia Minor, is one of the most vivid and fascinating memoirs of Greek history. Xenophon did not see many of the profound problems of history, but anyone who has perused his graphic account of the bitter retreat of the harassed Greeks across mountain ranges deep in snow and through almost impassable forests will surely admit that if Xenophon were alive today he would be a justly famous war correspondent.

**Hellenistic developments.** Hellenistic literature was far inferior to Hellenic, but the scholars of Alexandria developed valuable methods in library management and cataloguing. The great library at Alexandria must have contained hundreds if not thousands of rare literary masterpieces which were lost when the

library was destroyed during the attack of Julius Caesar on Egypt. Another Hellenistic contribution to literature was in the study of language and grammar. In 120 B.C. Dionysius wrote the first Greek grammar, containing the principal grammatical terms. This book has served as a model for succeeding grammars in every major language.

**Greek art.** The Greeks developed an art which expressed their attitudes of moderation, proportion, and poise. Their motto was "Nothing in excess, everything in proportion," and they combined their emotions and intellect harmoniously in their greatest work. Greek art expressed both civic pride and religious beliefs. But it showed none of the ostentation typical of Roman art. Architecture and sculpture are the only arts of which any examples remain. Such examples as the Parthenon are typical of Greek religious expression, while the athletic sculpture shows their interest in the human body.

**The Greeks as builders.** Greek art reached its zenith in Athens in the fifth century B.C. In the previous century architecture had flourished in Ionia, with the construction of large

temples of stone at Miletus and other Greek towns, in place of wooden structures. The Persian invasion made Athens a heap of smoking ruins, but the repulse of the oriental invaders left the Athenians free to reconstruct the Acropolis into a treasury of temples and gleaming statues. With these builders came the ultimate perfection of post and lintel building. The same elements as in Crete and Egypt were used, but they were greatly refined. It is believed that the temple with its marble columns, lintels, and gable roof was developed from an earlier wood construction.

In the age of Pericles such famous edifices as the Erechtheum, the Temple of Wingless Victory, and the superbly proportioned Parthenon was erected. The Parthenon, once containing the famous gold and ivory statue of Athena by Phidias, demonstrates the subtlety with which the Greeks built their masterpieces. The corner columns of this temple (seen in the illustration on the opposite page) are stouter than the others, and the spaces between them and the columns on either side are narrower than those between the center columns. They are so arranged that from any angle the spacing is such that there is adequate visual support for the roof. The colonnaded porch has an upward curve in the base so that it does not appear to sag. The building is full of such refinements.

The Greeks used three orders, or types, of columns. Doric, the order used in the Parthenon, is the oldest and simplest of the three. It has no base and is topped by a simple capital. A later order, the Ionic, is more slender, has a base, and the top of the column, or capital, is characterized by two spiral decorations called volutes. An example of this popular Ionic style is the Erechtheum, illustrated above. The more elaborate Ionic order is frequently contrasted with the simple masonry walls, so that both may be enhanced. Later there developed a third order called the Corinthian. It was a modified form of Ionic, but instead of volutes the columns were topped with acanthus leaves. Although a few Greek buildings used Corinthian columns, the style was much too ornate for the simplicity-loving Greeks. It remained for the ostentatious Romans to use the third order in their massive public buildings. Note its use in the Pantheon on page 171, and in the Roman-influenced church of St. Gilles, page 384.

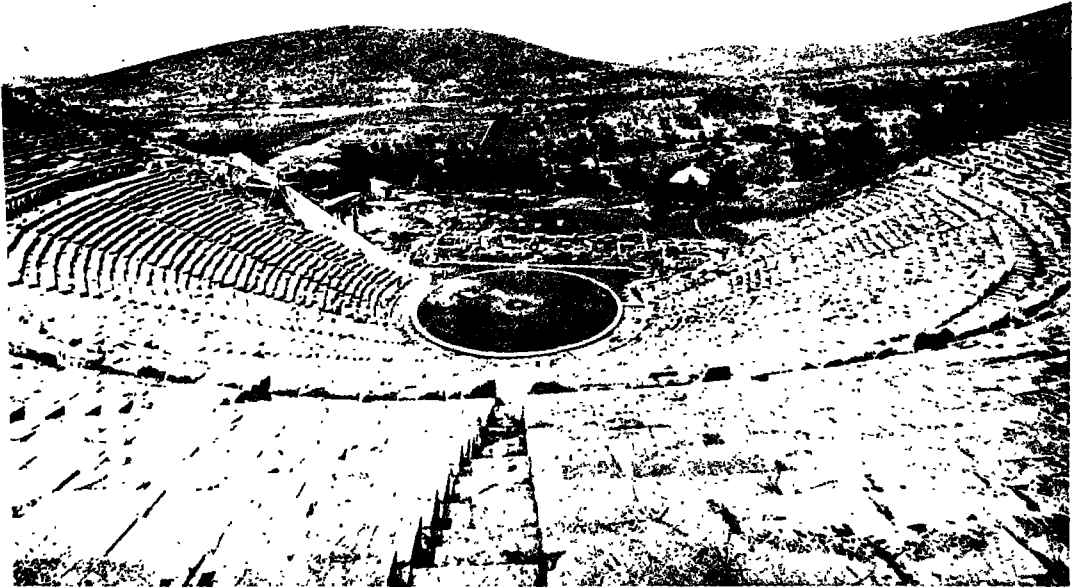


IONIC ORDER: THE ERECHTHEUM

The Acropolis buildings, as well as the Athenian Treasury built at the shrine of Delphi, show a strong sense of civic pride. Put where all men could see and enjoy them, the Greek temple buildings afford interesting comparisons with those of Egypt. Whereas the temple of Egypt was inclosed and mysterious, the Greek temple was built at the end of a long processional path. It was open for all, with a colonnaded porch and single statue hall inside. In fact there were often outside altars.

Other types of buildings also express the Greek way of life. Notable among these are the theaters and the stadiums and baths. In these gathering places Greek artists studied the human body and learned to express its forms in sculpture. The Greek love of drama is well known. The theater at Epidaurus, illustrated on the following page, shows the plan of the typical outdoor Greek theater. The circular shape of the spectators' sections, and the plan of the orchestra and proscenium were the ancestors of the modern theater.

The Hellenistic cities used Hellenic architectural forms, together with such oriental



THE THEATER AT EPIDAUROS



ARCHON: THE CALF-BEARER

additions as the clerestory and the arch. Where Hellenic architecture was used primarily for religious purposes, that of the Hellenistic world was dedicated to the building of massive palaces and government edifices. One of the famous Hellenistic buildings was the lighthouse at Alexandria, built of three diminishing stories, the top story containing a "lantern" of fire from resinous wood. The glow was probably reflected by means of convex mirrors. Hellenistic buildings were more elaborate than the earlier Greek structures, lacking Hellenic simplicity of expression.

**Greek sculpture.** The Greeks had no sense of shame regarding nudity. On the contrary they looked upon the nude form as embodying the highest natural grace and beauty. Therefore their sculpture represents the most realistic study and depiction of the human body that we have seen. The Hellenes ascribed to their gods the most perfect bodies. In that way religion aided Greek sculpture.

The best Greek sculpture was preceded by centuries of experimentation. The very earliest statues were of wood, and the bodies were extremely stiff and lifeless. Early Greek sculptors were influenced by Egyptian models, and their statues have one foot advanced and the arms hanging with clenched fists like Egyptian

figures. Their form shows quite obviously the tree trunks from which they were carved. The early "archaic" stone statues such as "The Calf-Bearer" by the artist Archon, shown on the opposite page, are also stiff and lacking in technical ability, but they are extremely vigorous. Their simple planes suggest the hard material from which they were carved. The fifth century B.C. witnessed a remarkable technical improvement. The Olympic games were an incentive to creating freer and more vigorous postures. With the building of temples during the Periclean age there was a need for sculptured decoration.

*Athenian sculptors.* A group of excellent sculptors now came to the fore in Athens. Polyclitus (about 430 B.C.) was the first to change the stance of the upright figure by putting the weight on the advanced foot, giving it the appearance of walking forward. He developed canons of balance which described what he considered should be the exact relationship between all parts of the body. Greek sculpture always followed the idea of perfect



THE DISCUS-THROWER



PROCESSION OF HORSEMEN, DECORATIVE FRIEZE ON THE PARTHENON



RED-FIGURED LECYTHUS, OR OIL JAR

proportion and balance, but fortunately for its development it did not abide by the nearly mathematical rules which Polyclitus laid down.

Myron (about 450 B.C.) advanced far beyond the early stiff sculpture. His "Discus-Thrower" (page 141) shows a figure in an athletic pose, but there is still a balance and restraint in the action. In this statue can be seen the perfection of marble carving and also the idealization of the human form typical of Greek art of the Periclean age. Myron was a master at portraying muscles and athletic poses but lacked the ability to endow his figures with the semblance of intellectual strength. The Greeks are believed to have used a type of pointing machine (a mechanical aid to carving large-scale statues from small models), a forerunner of the modern technique of sculpture enlargement. They apparently used small-scale models of terra cotta, a method which allowed greater technical perfection than carving directly in stone with no guide but the eye.

The greatest of the Periclean sculptors was Phidias. He supervised the decoration of the Parthenon and fashioned the gold and ivory statue of Athena for the temple. That masterpiece as well as his "Seated Zeus" are known to us only by tradition, but from all accounts they must have been magnificent. He also created an immense bronze statue of Athena, some thirty feet high, whose glistening spear-head could be seen by sailors miles out at sea as they directed their ships toward Piraeus. He carved the friezes of the Parthenon (a detail is illustrated on page 141) with a restraint which made them a perfect complement for the architectural elements of the temple. His subordination of every element to the whole made for very pleasing composition. Sculptural decoration of architecture has other limitations besides subordination to setting. In all sculpture the play of light and shade on a statue is a factor influencing design, but in architectural decoration the distance from which the sculpture is viewed makes it even more important. Sculpture which is to be seen from underneath must be planned with this in mind. The most important planes must be placed so that they will be seen properly when viewed from below. Architectural sculpture seen on the level of the eye may look very different from the same sculpture on the building. The Greek artists realized all these limitations and allowed them to influence their designs.

Greek artists painted both their buildings and their sculpture. The buildings were beige in tone, and the sculpture was picked out in brilliant colors.

**Later Greek sculpture.** After the age of Pericles Greek sculpture remained great but the style was changed. The figures of Phidias had been exalted and godlike; those of the sculptor Praxiteles (about 340 B.C.) were more worldly. Praxiteles was clever in his carving of marble, and although his figures may have lacked the strength of earlier ones, there was great restraint in them. His well-known "Hermes" is typical of his gracefully posed figures. One of the sculptors who worked on the Mausoleum of Halicarnassus was Scopas (fourth century B.C.), in whose work is seen the beginnings of the use of sudden movement and dramatic facial expression. This monument to Queen Artemisia's husband was one of the seven wonders of the ancient world. The Mausoleum appears throughout art history as an architectural and sculptural composition.

**Hellenistic sculpture.** Hellenistic sculpture was much more violent and dramatic than the moderate Hellenic statuary. One reason for this was the fact that the sculptor had complete technical control of his medium and was interested in showing his skill by depicting the most subtle emotions. He was able to twist the stone into writhing forms, as in the detail from the Laocoön group illustrated here. Thus the statues seem no longer to be the stone from which they were originally carved but appear almost like real flesh. This exhibition of technical skill is impressive but so lacking in restraint that it does not please for long. Hellenistic sculpture has achieved wide fame. The "Dying Gaul" (illustrated on the map on page 114) and the "Venus de Milo" are familiar everywhere. Another well-known statue (also sketched on the map) is the "Nike of Samothrace" (Winged Victory). Created to com-



DETAIL FROM THE LAOCOÖN GROUP

memorate a naval victory, the statue was designed to give the appearance of a figure-head with windswept garments. But with the entrance of a theatrical and melodramatic aspect into sculpture Greek statuary began to decline.

**Painting and pottery.** We have little true conception of Greek painting because almost all of it has perished. It is believed to have reached a high level of technical skill and to have been realistic in its depiction of the human body. Greek vases—of clay thrown on potters' wheels—have always been famous both for design and decoration. The vases very often depicted mythological or battle scenes. Every figure was carefully drawn in correct relation to the whole group and to the shape of the vase. The colors were black and red, and the shapes for specific purposes were repeated with few variations. The vase illustrated opposite is typical of its kind (*lecythus*), in both shape and decoration.

## Summary

It could almost be said that the Greeks taught us how to live properly without ever fully learning the secret themselves. Their contributions in philosophy, science, literature, and art are universal in spirit; yet the Greeks never applied that universal spirit to their own everyday affairs. Their civilization declined largely because they could never "get together" or become "practical." The city-states would not unite in a lasting union, which alone could have preserved Greece from outside invasion. Instead



they destroyed each other in the Peloponnesian War and soon lost the liberty which they had so dearly won from oriental despotism. Not only were the city-states separated from one another, but the lower social classes of each *polis* never enjoyed any democratic privileges. Slavery was tolerated in all the city-states, and it proved a costly handicap to a well-balanced and contented society. It also hindered the development of a prosperous economic system. The Greeks as a people disdained to soil their hands in manual labor. Because of this attitude they made little advance in inventions and the comforts of living. They preferred speculation to experimentation, a fact which accounts for their success in philosophy and literature and their failure to achieve an inductive technique in the physical sciences.

The Greek achievements were qualified in certain respects. The Greeks themselves were indebted to the cultures of the orient for many of their basic ideas in science, philosophy, and art. They were highly original in their individualistic and speculative attitude toward life, but they owed much of their knowledge to Egypt and the Near East. Again, the Greek contributions were generally confined to the Hellenic cities of Athens and Miletus and the Hellenistic center at Alexandria. Some of the city-states (especially in the mountainous interior of Greece) were little more advanced than the Hittites. Lastly the Greeks did not develop a well-rounded civilization; they were not brilliant in their material culture. It is true that the Hellenistic world did advance in material civilization, but these advances were far more oriental than Hellenic.

Greek thought, art, and institutions have profoundly affected modern life. The Greeks were the first people to substitute democracy for absolutism. Athens, the first great (although limited) democracy, marks the zenith of Hellenic culture and freedom. Unquestionably the political atmosphere of freedom stimulated thought and inquiry among her citizens, for in the state of Sparta regimented action enslaved the minds of her people. Again, we are indebted to Greece for creating political science. The *Republic* of Plato and writings of Aristotle were the first attempts at analyzing the purposes of governments and suggesting improvements.

The Greeks were the first thinkers to search after a rational explanation of the universe. So far did they advance in speculative thought that their problems in philosophy are still the questions for which we in the twentieth century are seeking answers. Especially important among Greek contributions were the atomic, relativity, and evolutionary theories put forward by their philosophers. Plato's theory of "Ideas" and Aristotle's theory of logic have had an incalculable effect upon all later systems of thought. The views of the Epicureans and Stoics are analogous to our own attitudes toward behavior.

We are indebted to Aristotle for classifying the main divisions of scientific knowledge, as well as for his initial contributions to biology and embryology. Thanks to Hippocrates the foundations of medicine were laid upon a firm basis. In physics the work of Archimedes proved invaluable, as did that of Pythagoras and Euclid in geometry, Aristarchus and Hipparchus in astronomy, and Eratosthenes in geography.

We still find delight in the epic poems of Homer, the tragedies of Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides, and the brilliant comedies of Aristophanes. The basis of all modern

historical writing was established by Herodotus, while Thucydides took as his ideal the recording of data that was both accurate and rational. In architecture and sculpture the same spirit of fidelity to ideals is apparent. Likewise, the architectural contributions of the Greeks—their three orders of columns, their principle of proportion, and their building, such as that in the Parthenon—still influence modern design. Later periods have, however, been more influenced by the form and feeling of Greek art than by the basic guiding principle of proportion, moderation, and harmony which underlie it. For this reason we have had many bad copies of an art that was an expression of a specific period in history.

What is it about Greece that makes us, over two thousand years removed from Plato and Phidias, speak in words of admiration? The secret lies in the originality with which the Greeks met every situation. Free of oriental tradition and superstition, they saw each problem in an entirely new light. They examined it in a spirit of critical inquiry, and they sought for an explanation that was according to natural rather than supernatural law. Their view of life was thus something entirely new in the world's history; it tended to be secular and rational instead of religious and credulous. This psychological change in human thinking may have been the greatest contribution which the Greeks gave.

There is a simplicity and directness about the Greek nature which is often startling to our modern sophisticated minds. They detested sham and exaggeration; they loved truth, beauty, and moderation. The quest after truth marks the Greek mind at its best. It made possible—with a mere handful of men—a magnificent advance in the history of human thought.

## THE ROMAN WORLD: 2000 B.C.—200 A.D.

<b>2000 B.C.</b>	<b>The Founding of Rome</b>	
	Indo-European speaking peoples invade Italy	
c. 1150	Etruscans settle in Italy	
1000?	Rome inhabited	
	Etruscan kings rule Rome	Civilization at height, 6th century
509	Roman republic established: Etruscans ejected	
<b>509-133</b>	<b>Expansion of Rome</b>	Plebeian quest for equality
509-270	Rome conquers Italy: Etruscans, Latin League, Greeks	Valerian Law, 509 Office of Tribune, 494 Laws of Twelve Tables, 449 Hortensian Law, 287
264-146	Punic Wars: Carthage humbled	Formative period in literature, 300-100
	Syria conquered	Rome brought unity, law, order to the western world
168	Egypt acknowledges vassalship	
146	Macedonia becomes province	
133	Rome obtains Pergamum	
<b>133-30</b>	<b>From Republic to Empire</b>	Hellenization of Rome
	Land problem: degeneration of masses	
133-121	Gracchi attempt reform: fail	
	Rise of dictators: Marius, Sulla	Golden Age of Literature, 80-31 Lucretius, Cicero, Catullus, Strabo
59	Advent of Julius Caesar	Many reforms: administration, dole, agriculture, calendar
49	Caesar crosses Rubicon: conquest of Rome	
30	Octavian (Augustus) defeats Antony and Cleopatra: establishes Principate	
<b>30 B.C.-193 A.D.</b>	<b>The Period of the Principate</b>	
30 B.C.-14 A.D.	Augustan Age	Golden Age of Literature, 31 B.C.-14 A.D. Virgil, Horace, Livy, Ovid
14-69	The Julian Caesars Tiberius, Claudius, Caligula, Nero	Silver Age of Literature, 14-117 Seneca, Martial, Juvenal, Tacitus.
69-96	Age of Flavians	Celsus, Pliny, Plutarch
96-180	Age of Antonines	Empire's greatest prosperity and power

## CHAPTER 6

### *Pax Romana*



THE Roman and Greek civilizations were largely complementary. The Greeks excelled in theoretical musing, in mental speculation, in seeking the eternal verities of philosophy and science. They were extremely sensitive to beauty, and they expressed their sensitivity in beautiful works of art. Intense intellectual curiosity for its own sake, coupled with originality and creativeness, was the keynote of the Greek spirit, reflected in their art, literature, and philosophy. As a result we have the Parthenon, the *Republic* of Plato, the "Discus-Thrower," and the *Oedipus Tyrannus* of Sophocles.

The Romans, on the other hand, had little use for mental gymnastics unless they had some practical purpose in mind. They were above all a practical folk, who cared little for theoretical investigations in anatomy but gave us the first real hospitals, who knew nothing about the germ theory of disease but appreciated the importance of an adequate supply of fresh water for their cities, who created little art for its own sake but instead erected imposing imperial monuments to testify to their accomplishments in empire building, and who created the first extensive secular architecture designed to fit the needs of a government which desired both commodious and dignified civic buildings. In many parts of Europe the practical hand of the Roman left its mark. The great wall of Hadrian in the north of England may still be seen. Beautiful and very efficient baths still exist, attesting the Romans' love of physical comfort and well-being. Massive amphitheaters may be seen in the south of France, and towering aqueducts still remain in Spain and France. Scattered along the coast of northern Africa, covered almost completely by sand, are traces of the great Roman roads and cities, once surrounded by

fertile fields of grain but now only a hint, amid today's desert sands, of what was once a great civilization.

Rome was the great intermediary. She was the bridge over which passed the rich contributions of the Fertile Crescent, Egypt, and especially Greece to form the structure of our modern civilization. The Greeks, starting with a few fundamentals obtained from the Aegean civilization, which in turn had been indebted to the Near East, had created a rich civilization. Unfortunately, political anarchy and civil war threatened to destroy Hellenistic civilization. Into this political vacuum came the Romans. They restored law and order and, having little philosophy, literature, and art of their own, enthusiastically adopted those of the conquered Greeks. With the creation of the far-flung Roman empire, Greek civilization was spread from north Britain to India. The legacy of the Near East and Greece became the property of millions of people living in the Roman empire. Thus the outstanding contributions which man had developed since the dawn of history about 5000 B.C. in Europe and in the Near East were preserved and spread by the great intermediaries, the Romans.

### *Early Rome*

**P**reservation of Greek culture. Following the death of Alexander the Great in 323 B.C. his far-flung empire split into three parts, each ruled by one of his generals. As we have seen in the previous chapter, Greek culture was spread after Alexander throughout the eastern Mediterranean world. But while culture flourished in the Hellenistic period, the age-old political weakness of the Greeks again manifested itself. Exaggerated individualism

in politics prevented the maintenance of unity in Alexander's empire. By waging war on each other his successors wasted their strength and even threatened to destroy the wonderful civilization that had been nourished in Greece and diffused throughout the eastern Mediterranean world. Fortunately, before that dismal prospect occurred, a new power extended its might into the Greek world, crushed all opposition, lessened wars and destructive rivalries, and thus preserved Greek culture for posterity. The new power, Rome, not only saved Hellenistic culture from self-destruction but strengthened and disseminated it throughout the western Mediterranean world. For at least five hundred years following the collapse of Alexander's empire, the history of the western world is the story of Rome.

**Early Italy.** The Roman empire had its genesis in the Italian peninsula. During Paleolithic times Italy had been inhabited by primitive people who developed in much the same way as other Old Stone Age peoples of Europe. Migrations from Africa also brought to Italy a white Mediterranean stock possessing a Neolithic culture.

About 2000 B.C., when Indo-European-speaking peoples were invading the Aegean world, a western wing of the same invaders entered Italy. Settling in the valley of the Po River, the invaders brought with them the horse, agriculture, and the use of bronze. An-



thropologists refer to the remains of the first Indo-European-speaking invaders as the Terramara culture.

From 1000 to 800 B.C. another migration of Indo-European-speaking peoples from the region of the Danube brought to Italy the use of iron. These invaders established a culture known to anthropologists as the Villanovan, after the site where the most important remains were discovered. This last wave of Indo-European-speaking peoples was composed of a diversity of tribes called the Italic people. Absorbing the earlier populations, the Italic tribes gradually took possession of much of the country. The most important group of Italians were the Latins, who settled along the west coast south of the Tiber, a region which became known after them as the plain of Latium.

The Italic tribesmen were hardy peasants who herded sheep and cattle and lived in small, scattered communities. They had as yet no cities, and their largest buildings were crude, round huts constructed of wooden frames on which were plastered mud and thatch. About fifteen miles from the mouth of the Tiber there was a shallow ford. Here the Latins built a sturdy bridge across the river and nearby on a high hill erected a strong fort called the Palatine. As the ford was the focal point for several trade routes, an open-air market soon developed, and a permanent population began to congregate in the vicinity of the ford. This was the humble genesis of the proud city of Rome, which was inhabited perhaps as far back as 1000 B.C.

**Italian geography.** Geography did much to shape the course of events in Italy. The Italian peninsula is about six hundred miles long. It is about four times the size of Greece and two thirds the size of California. A great mountainous backbone, the Apennines, runs down almost the entire peninsula. But the country is not so rugged as Greece, and consequently mountains did not constitute such a barrier to political unification. Furthermore, the plain of Latium and its city, Rome, occupied a strategic position. It was easy to defend, and once the Latins had begun a career of conquest, they occupied a central position which made it difficult for their enemies to unite successfully against them. The strategic position of Rome was repeated on a larger scale by Italy itself. Italy juts into the



Mediterranean almost in the center of the great sea (see map, page 163). When once she was unified, Italy's commanding position invited her to lead in unifying the entire Mediterranean world.

The best valleys of Italy were on the western slopes of the Apennines. The Italian peninsula, therefore, faced the west, not the east. For a long time Italian culture lagged behind that of Greece because the latter was in a better position to receive the culture of the Near East. But Italy's relative isolation gave the Italians the opportunity for independent development, and ultimately their expansion brought them into contact with the rich culture in the eastern Mediterranean.

**Rome's neighbors.** Soon after the Italic tribes settled in Italy, other peoples entered the peninsula. To the north were a highly civilized and capable people called Etruscans; farther north were the Gauls, a warlike and predatory people; and to the south were the Greek colonies, which were miniature replicas of the brilliant culture that flourished in the mother country. Immediately southwest of the Italian peninsula across the short span of the Mediterranean on the African coast was Carthage, an enterprising and powerful commercial city that nourished ambitions of controlling the western Mediterranean (see map).



*An interesting study in armor is to be found in a bronze statuette of an Etruscan warrior.*

The Etruscans came from the Aegean world about 1150 B.C. and settled in north central Italy. Their civilization was at its height in the sixth century B.C. and evidently was a vigorous one.

During our discussion of Greece we saw how colonies were established as far west as Massilia and east to the Black Sea. Southern Italy and the nearby island of Sicily were favorite locations for Greek colonization. Greek settlements known as Magna Graecia were flourishing there by the eighth century B.C. Syracuse in Sicily and Tarentum on the mainland were especially thriving Greek communities. The Greek colonies were important centers for the diffusion of Hellenic culture. Furthermore they acted as a buffer against the spread of Carthaginian power until the Italic tribes were ready to wage battle on their own behalf.

**Etruscan rule at Rome.** Surrounded by powerful neighbors, the Latin tribes feared

for their independence. About 750 B.C. the Etruscans took possession of the plain of Latium. Using the fort on Palatine Hill as his stronghold, the Etruscan king gradually extended his power over the surrounding Latin settlements, and Rome became an Etruscan city-kingdom. For about two centuries, tradition says, the Etruscan kings ruled Rome. During this period the Latin people adopted the highly developed culture of the rulers, from whom they may have learned the use of the arch and other building methods. The Italians also adopted many Etruscan political usages, the practice of gladiatorial combats, the use of divination, and certain religious traditions pertaining to Jupiter, Minerva, and Juno. The Etruscans may even have given the city on the Tiber its name.

**The Roman republic.** In the year 509 B.C. the Roman aristocracy was able to expel its Etruscan rulers. The period of kings came to an end, and a republic was inaugurated. The new government was in no sense democratic; an aristocratic oligarchy controlled the policies of the state. In the days of the Etruscan kings a noble class called the patricians had developed, which alone possessed full rights of citizenship. The origin of the class is unknown, but it was economically very powerful. The patricians were wealthy landowners, while the plebeians, the non-noble freemen, were usually small farmers and artisans. Only patricians were eligible to office, and the plebeians exercised little influence in government. The king was assisted by a body of three hundred patricians, called the senate. There was also another governmental body, called the *comitia curiata*, which comprised all citizens. Its power, however, was negligible. It passed on the nomination of high officials and such matters as war and peace. It could not initiate laws, and its action could be vetoed by the senate. It also served as a last court of appeal when a sentence of death was passed by a judge.

Following the deposition of the kings the senate became the most important governing body in Rome. Its members were appointed for life by the consuls, officials chosen annually from the body of senators to take the place of the king. They nominated their successors and called the assembly (the *comitia*) together. Their power when first established was very broad: They were the commanders

of the army, the high priests, and the supreme judges. In the event of war or serious domestic emergency, a dictator could be substituted for the two consuls. He was given supreme power for a term of six months.

The old assembly, the *comitia curiata*, lost most of its power to a new body called the *comitia centuriata*, an assembly of arms-bearing men, later expanded to include all citizens. This body elected the consuls. The patricians disliked the idea of including the plebeians in the new assembly, but as Rome was menaced on every hand by enemies, it was necessary to allow the common people to assume their share of the burdens of the state. However, the patricians took care to see that the wealthy classes could not be outvoted by the plebeians.

As we shall see, the new republic was soon engaged in a long period of war. The press of governmental business and its increasing complexity demanded that a number of new offices be created. To administer justice, two *praetors* were created. To take care of the census, to guard the morals of the people, and to make assessments, two *censors* were established. To look after the treasury, two *quaestors* were set up. Finally, two *tribunes*, later increased to ten, were created to protect the interests of the plebeians.

**The growth of democracy.** The principal theme in the domestic history of Rome for more than two hundred years following the establishment of a republic was the struggle of the plebeians for political and social equality. The conflict between the two classes was bitter. There were numerous riots and outbreaks of violence. But the struggle never degenerated into outright civil war, and the bloodshed was, by and large, on rather a small scale.

As early as 509 B.C. the Valerian Law granted the plebeians the right to appeal to the *comitia centuriata* if the consuls passed the death sentence for a crime. The creation of the office of tribune in 494 B.C. was also an important gain for the plebeians. The tribunes could stop any legislation or halt any executive act that unjustly threatened the rights of the plebeians. In 471 the Publilian Law created another assembly, the *comitia tributa*. Presided over by the tribunes, the new body could not legislate. It did enact resolutions, or plebiscites, which became law if accepted by the *comitia centuriata* and the senate.

As in Athens the common people resented very much the fact that the law was unwritten. The patricians were its custodians and interpreted it to suit their own interests. Following much agitation a committee was sent to Greece to study the laws of Draco and the work of Solon and Cleisthenes. As a result, in 449 B.C. the Law of the Twelve Tables was adopted. Roman law was now in written form, and the common people knew just where they stood.

Shortly after the codification of the law, a large measure of social equality was gained by the plebeians through a law which made marriages between the two orders valid. It was an important step, for hitherto in order to get a good job or to have any voice in government one had to be a patrician. As long as there had remained a legal barrier against intermarriage between the two classes, the plebeians could not hope to compete on equal terms. Other gains were achieved when the offices of consul, dictator, and censor became open to plebeians. Finally the long struggle for equality culminated in 287 B.C. in the passing of the Hortensian Law, which made the plebiscites of the *tributa*, the assembly of the plebeians, law without the ratification of any other body. From then on the *tributa* was in a position to control the policies of the state.

One of the most important characteristics of the Roman people was their common-sense, practical bent in politics. In some of the Greek city-states the struggle for political rights on the part of the poorer classes was attended by bloodshed and bitter conflicts. In Rome, while the patricians tenaciously clung to their privileges, they were usually wise enough to give way in order to prevent civil war. The fact that a long series of wars created new conditions and problems in the Roman state that rendered the gains of the plebeians illusory does not detract from this ancient example of the possibility of constitutional evolution.

**Life in the early republic.** The Romans were a simple farmer folk when they got rid of their Etruscan kings and set up a republic. They had no system of coinage. Wealth was counted in flocks, and manufacturing was confined to the making of crude pottery and a few bronze weapons and tools. Before 500 B.C. iron was little used for implements. The





*A bronze statuette shows the Roman sacrificial butcher about to kill the boar chosen for sacrifice.*

average Roman was a small landholder who was his own employer and who produced crops, not for sale, but for his own household use. These early Romans were an industrious, hardy, and unsophisticated folk.

The fundamental unit of early Roman society was the family. Here the father's power was absolute. There could be no disobedience to his will. So strong was the force of discipline that the young people unquestioningly accepted the traditions and stern code of behavior of their elders. As yet the Roman educational system was very primitive. There was no literature, drama, or philosophy. What education there was centered in the home. The father imparted what amounted to the three R's and, more important, instilled in his children those virtues every Roman was supposed to possess, manliness and self-control.

So important was the family that the Romans have been called the creators of the

home. Family and home gave the early Romans their greatest attribute, their strength of character. Although there has been perhaps too much emphasis upon the sterling character of the early Romans, it cannot be denied that no other people in history have emphasized character more. The discipline that molded the young Romans was perhaps too severe by our standards, but it produced citizens who were loyal, serious, dutiful, and courageous.

**Religion.** The religion of the Romans reflected their simple mode of life and also their practical nature. The average Roman was interested in two things, abundant crops and the welfare of his home. Roman religion had little connection with morality, and ideas of the future life were very vague. Their religion was a kind of bargain with the gods. Supernatural powers were placated and their assistance assured by numerous ceremonies. Religious rites primarily centered in the home and were in the hands of the father, the *pater familias*. To protect the family, the Romans made their offerings to the spirit of Vesta, whose realm was the hearth, to Janus, who watched over the doorway, and to the penates, who guarded the house stores.

In addition to the household spirits that protected the family, there was also a group that protected the state. These spirits became more and more important, until a kind of public religion developed, an official cult which emphasized the citizen's duty to the state and also aimed at securing for the nation the assistance of certain deities who controlled the fortunes of war and the destiny of the universe. The most important of the early deities were Jupiter, who controlled the physical universe, Mars, the god of war, Janus, the guardian of the gateway to Rome, and Tellus, the female goddess of fertility and mother earth. Much of the ritual in Roman religion, some of the most important gods, and the practice of divination were borrowed from the Etruscans and from the Greeks.

### *From City-State to World Conqueror*

**T**he background of Roman expansion. Now that we have traced the genesis of the Roman republic and seen how the early Romans lived, we are ready to recount one of the most remarkable stories of conquest in

world history. We shall see how a diminutive city-state in a little less than four hundred years (509-133 B.C.) became the master of the Mediterranean world.

We have seen how early Rome was sur-

rounded by powerful neighbors and how for a time she was ruled by one of them. In the preliminary rounds fought for supremacy in Italy the Romans were not participants. The main contenders were Carthage, the Greeks, and the Etruscans. At first the Greeks were victorious. They defeated a Carthaginian army that had invaded Sicily (480 B.C., the same year as the battle of Salamis), and a little later the Greeks defeated a large Etruscan fleet. By 400 B.C. it seemed inevitable that the Greek colonies would develop into a single nation that would dominate Italy and the western Mediterranean.

This likely event, however, did not materialize. The intermittent warfare that was waged among the Etruscans, Greeks, and Carthaginians ultimately eliminated two of the trio and left only Carthage in the field against Rome.

**Roman expansion in Italy.** Rome had meantime been slowly growing in power. After the expulsion of the Etruscan kings, Rome was on the defensive for nearly a century. Under the Etruscans Rome had been recognized as supreme over the plain of Latium. After the decline of Etruscan influence, however, the Latin peoples on the outskirts of Rome declared their independence and established a Latin League of defense. After some fighting with Rome, the other Latin tribes realized that a truce with Rome was essential in order for them to combine against their mutual enemies, the Etruscans and certain unfriendly Italic tribes. In 493 B.C., therefore, the Latin League and Rome entered into a loose league of defense.

The new combination was so successful that by the beginning of the fourth century B.C. it had become the chief power in central Italy. About that time (390 B.C.) a temporary disaster fell upon Rome. Fierce blond warriors from the Po valley, the Gauls, fell upon the city and burned it to the ground. The citadel on Capitol Hill, however, was not taken, and after a long siege the Gauls finally left Rome. Her citizens, undaunted by its destruction, rebuilt the city and constructed a new wall of fortifications.

Rome's expansion over her neighbors was now resumed. The allies of Rome, the members of the Latin League, became alarmed at her growing power, and war followed. The conflict was ended in 338 B.C. with the victory of Rome. The Latin League was dissolved,

and each city or tribe was forced to sign a separate treaty of alliance with Rome. The date for the victory of Rome over the Latin League is important. Not only did it signalize the rise of a new power in the western Mediterranean, but in the same year the Greek city-states fell into the hands of Philip of Macedon.

The Etruscan cities were now rapidly succumbing to the Roman advance. A new foe appeared, however, who for a time menaced Rome. The Samnites, a strong Italic tribe, had established themselves in the highlands of the Apennines in central Italy. War broke out between them and Rome. After severe fighting in which the Romans lost several early battles, the Samnites, though assisted by both Etruscans and Gauls, were overwhelmed in 296 B.C.

Only two rivals remained to contest Rome's meteoric rise to supremacy in the western Mediterranean, the Greeks in southern Italy and the Carthaginians in north Africa. Little more than ten years after the defeat of the Samnites, the Romans moved down on Magna Graecia. The Greeks, with their fondness for luxury and their tendency to factionalism, were a poor match for their adversaries. However, Tarentum, the leading Greek city, succeeded in obtaining the assistance of Pyrrhus, a capable and ambitious Greek king. It was his aim to defeat the Romans and carve out for himself a great empire like Alexander's in the west. Bringing 20,000 foot soldiers, 3000 cavalry, and a force of elephants, Pyrrhus was a dangerous foe. He defeated the Romans in the first encounter but at so heavy a cost that a dearly bought triumph has ever since been termed a Pyrrhic victory.

The hard-pressed Romans at this juncture were assisted by the Carthaginians, who mistakenly thought that the Greeks were their greatest danger. They sought to maintain what diplomats call today "the balance of power" by assisting the Romans. Later they were to pay dearly for their mistake. Pyrrhus was finally defeated by the Romans on land, his fleet was scattered by the Carthaginians, and he returned to Greece. With no one to bar their way, the Roman legions now proceeded to conquer southern Italy, and by 270 B.C. all of Magna Graecia had passed into Roman hands.

In a space of about 225 years, Rome, the primitive little city on the banks of the Tiber,

had become master of Italy from the toe and heel of the peninsula in the south to the valley of the Po in the north. There had been no definite or preconceived plan in the expansion. Surrounded by enemies, Rome had been forced to fight for her existence, and as she disposed of rivals near at home, her success caused more remote powers to attempt to crush her. In meeting these threats Rome became supreme in Italy.

**Treatment of conquered peoples.** In general the Romans, rather than enslaving their conquered foes, treated them with tact and justice. This policy made possible the development of a common patriotism, based on loyalty to Rome, throughout the Italian peninsula. The former adversaries of Rome were divided into three groups: (1) Roman citizens proper: those who lived in the vicinity of Rome and had full rights of citizenship, and others living in old Latin towns that had been conquered by Rome who were citizens but could not vote and hold office in Rome, (2) Latin allies, related peoples, who were given much local self-government, (3) and the Italian allies, comprising the bulk of the conquered people. Bound to Rome by treaty, the Italian allies had to supply troops and adhere to Rome's foreign policy. The peninsula was now under the protectorate of one power. The name *Italia* was coming into use, showing the beginning of national unity. Real political and cultural unity, however, was as yet a long way off. The language and customs of Rome did not triumph fully in Italy for another two centuries.

**The Roman legions.** The efficiency of the Roman military forces was a significant factor in the conquest of Italy. The sturdy, patriotic peasantry from which the legions were recruited made superb soldiers. Whether on attack or defense the early Romans exhibited great bravery, physical stamina, and iron discipline. The basic military unit of the Romans was the legion, composed of three thousand heavily armed men, supplemented by a cavalry squadron of three hundred and an army of twelve hundred light-armed foot soldiers. The phalanx, used by the Greeks, had tremendous crushing power. Like a mastodon it moved slowly forward with irresistible force. The Roman legion, on the other hand, was like a pack of lions, incredibly swift and powerful in attack. The Roman army ob-

tained its maneuverability by the perfection of "joints" in its formation. In other words, the legion was broken up into smaller units, each capable of independent and rapid action. A Roman army was divided into three parallel divisions. In the event that any part of the front line gave way, a section of the rear divisions moved to the front. Each of the three divisions was in turn broken up into maniples of 120 men. Each maniple could move backward or forward without disturbing the formations on either side.

**The Carthaginians.** With the extermination of Greek power in Magna Graecia only Carthage remained as Rome's rival in the west. The great trading city situated on the African coast just southwest of the island of Sicily had been founded as a Phoenician colony about 875 B.C. The Carthaginians, like other early Phoenicians, became famous as sailors and traders. Their ships went into the Atlantic and as far north as the Baltic. The western Mediterranean was essentially Carthaginian water, and Carthaginian trade restrictions greatly hampered the commerce of all other traders in the region.

The primary concern of the people of Carthage was business. Little else mattered. The state was controlled by a wealthy clique of businessmen. There was no large body of freemen. The army was made up of hired mercenaries. Much more wealthy and populous than Rome, Carthage seemed powerful enough to halt Roman expansion, but the selfishness of her commercial oligarchy and the lack of a loyal body of free citizenry proved a source of fatal weakness.

**The First Punic War.** War broke out in 264 B.C. over a trivial incident in Sicily, which both Rome and Carthage wished to control. At first Rome could make little headway, for her citizens were a nation of landlubbers, and she had never possessed a large fleet. Undaunted by this drawback, the Romans built one hundred ships and meanwhile trained crews of oarsmen on land. During the First Punic War (the Latin word for Carthaginian was *punicus*) several naval disasters overtook the Romans, costing the lives of 200,000 men. But by great sacrifices the citizens of Rome raised additional money for new fleets, which finally defeated those of Carthage, and in 241 B.C. the Carthaginians had to sue for peace. As a result of the encounter Rome annexed

Sicily and gained naval supremacy in the western Mediterranean.

**Hannibal.** Thwarted in the Mediterranean, Carthage now busied herself in trying to build an empire in Spain. Rome, however, was determined that she should not recoup her might. While both powers jockeyed for position, a young Carthaginian general precipitated war by attacking a town in Spain that was allied to Rome. The young commander was Hannibal, who had sworn to his father lifelong enmity to Rome. Taking the initiative, Hannibal with an army of about 60,000 men crossed the Alps. His campaign was based on the hope that the Gauls would aid him and that Rome's allies would desert to his side. After terrible privations Hannibal and his men, barely thirty thousand, reached the fertile Po valley. His little army, however, soon proved its mettle. Within three years the Romans had suffered three serious defeats. In one battle, Cannae, nearly fifty thousand Romans were killed.

Hannibal's forces never matched those of the Romans in numbers. At Cannae, for example, 80,000 Romans were almost completely destroyed by barely 40,000 Carthaginians. From time to time Hannibal obtained additional recruits from across the Alps, from Spain and Gaul, but these were less than 10,000 in all and untrained. Hannibal also received some help from the Greek cities and even some Italian cities that forsook their alliance with Rome, but help from these sources was never dependable. Although outnumbered he usually was able to outwit the Roman commanders by his rapid marches. He showed amazing skill in living off the land in an unfriendly country.

Hannibal was above all an inspiring leader. He was never too tired to mingle with his men after a tiring march or bloody battle, cheering the wounded or disconsolate and keeping up an amazing morale that carried the Carthaginian army successfully through many ordeals. Hannibal was never defeated in Italy, but his inadequate resources did not enable him to inflict a knockout blow upon the Romans, who tenaciously kept up the struggle despite a long string of defeats. This Second Punic War has been described as a "colossal contest between the nation Rome and the man Hannibal."<sup>1</sup> Hannibal's military genius and inspiring leadership received inadequate support

from home, while a united Roman people refused to despair in the face of disastrous defeats. Under such conditions no individual, however brilliant, could triumph over the will of a united nation.

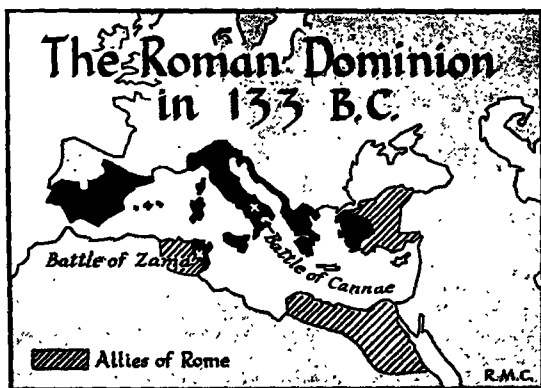
At last the Romans obtained a general, Scipio, who was a match in military strategy for the great Hannibal. Forced to return home after fifteen years spent on Italian soil, Hannibal met the legions of Scipio in the decisive battle of Zama. The Carthaginians suffered a complete defeat and in 201 B.C. were forced to accept a harsh treaty. Spain was taken by Rome, while Carthage was disarmed and forced to pay an indemnity.

Carthage was now little more than a protectorate of Rome, and there was therefore no justification for waging further war against her. But the lust of conquest was becoming apparent in Rome as her citizens sensed their destiny as world conquerors. Acting as their spokesman the influential Cato, a censor, ended all his speeches with "*Delenda est Carthago*"—"Carthage must be destroyed."

**The Third Punic War.** Treacherously provoking a war in 149 B.C., the Romans besieged Carthage for two years. In spite of heroic resistance the defenders were unable to prevent the scaling of the walls of the city. For six days the inhabitants fought with the fury of despair in the city streets but were finally overpowered. Most of the people were sold into slavery, the city was fired, and the ground on which it had stood was plowed and salt flung into the furrows to destroy the soil's fertility.

A kind fate prevented Hannibal from witnessing the destruction of Carthage. Following the Second Punic War he had become an exile in the east, where he tried to enlist support for a coalition against Rome. Failing in his plans, he became a fugitive and finally obtained asylum with the king of a small region in Asia Minor. His host, however, betrayed him, and to escape capture by an armed band of Romans Hannibal committed suicide (about 183 B.C.). His last words are reputed to have been, "Let us release the Romans from their long anxiety, since they think it too long to wait for the death of an old man." The story of Hannibal has been called "history's most glorious failure."

**Roman intervention in the east.** During the many conflicts which enhanced Rome's



power, the heirs of Alexander's great empire were carrying on ceaseless feuds among themselves. In Rome's struggle with Hannibal, the latter had obtained the assistance of Philip V of Macedon. The Roman senate greatly resented Philip's action and also feared that Philip might endeavor to create a coalition which would menace Rome. The Romans therefore felt obliged to turn eastward and wage war on Philip of Macedon. In a decisive battle in 197 B.C. the heavy Macedonian phalanx proved no match for the swift and mobile Roman legion.

A few years later, in a quarrel over Greece and Asia Minor, Roman armies humbled the powerful Syrian Seleucid king. Although they annexed no territory from his domains, they

enhanced Roman prestige in the eastern Mediterranean and made it plain to the Seleucid ruler that he was to stay out of the Roman sphere of influence. In 168 B.C. Egypt, another large division of Alexander's empire, allied herself to Rome. Most of the Mediterranean region was now under the influence of the Roman empire.

Following the defeat of Philip of Macedon, Rome permitted the Greek city-states to rule themselves subject to Roman protection. The next fifty years, however, brought little peace and order to the Greek peninsula. Two more wars were fought between Macedon and Rome, while the Greeks themselves, though free from Macedonian rule, continually quarreled among themselves and plotted against Rome. An end came to that state of affairs when, in 146 B.C., the exasperated Romans burned down the city of Corinth. After this the Greek city-states came under close Roman rule.

In 133 B.C. another important extension of Roman power occurred. In that year the king of Pergamum in Asia Minor died leaving no heir. Realizing perhaps that Roman conquest was inevitable, he willed his territory to Rome. Using this bequest as a start, Rome eventually took over Asia Minor and other territories in the Near East. The maps on these pages show the continued expansion of Roman power.

### *From Republic to Empire*

**Changes in government.** As we glance back over the political history of Rome thus far, it is apparent that it consists of two dominant themes: (1) the democratization of the government, which was achieved by 287 B.C., and (2) the expansion of Rome. With the extermination of Carthage and the defeat of the rulers who inherited Alexander's empire in the eastern Mediterranean, Rome became the mistress of the western world. But the next century (133-33 B.C.) was to see Rome convulsed with civil war and threatened with extinction. Her conquests created many social and economic problems which the senate was unable to solve. The inability of the republic to rule efficiently finally led to dictatorship and the extinction of constitutional government. Let us see what the problems were which followed in the train of the Roman conquests.

**The decline of small farming.** When Sicily was conquered, her inhabitants were forced to pay a huge tribute in wheat. In addition, cheap cereals were imported into Italy from Africa. The small farmers in Italy soon found it impossible to compete with the imported produce. Improved farming methods copied from Sicily encouraged wealthy aristocrats to buy up tracts of land and introduce large-scale farming. The latter trend was especially profitable because thousands of slaves from the conquered areas were available to work on the estates. The large slave plantations were called *latifundia*, and by 200 B.C. they had become the rule in Italy, while small farms were the exception.

The disappearance of the small landowner was the basic cause of the degeneration of the Roman common people. Thousands of sturdy farmer peasants returned from the wars to find



farming unprofitable. Many peasant lads came back from their adventures abroad with the legions quite unwilling to settle down to a humdrum life on the farm. The decay of small farming sent a large army of these unemployed laborers flocking to the city of Rome.

**Profiteering and luxury.** Roman officials in the provinces seized opportunities for graft and became a wealthy class of aristocrats. Opportunities for profit in large-scale farming and war contracts had resulted in the growth of an opulent class of businessmen called *equites*. Nearly everyone among the upper classes tried to get his hands on the war contracts, which had to do with supplying the army with wheat, meat, clothing, and weapons. Even in peacetime the racket in contracts corrupted the government.

The vast wealth flowing from the conquered provinces into Italy was not used for constructive purposes. Instead it was spent for luxuries by the wealthy and for doles to the landless plebeians. More and more the unemployed mobs in Rome demanded gifts of food and free amusement. The sturdy and industrious Roman farmer of the early days was now nearly extinct.

**Senatorial rule.** The republic had fared little better. The plebeians, as we have seen, had gained political equality after a long struggle, but the many wars nullified their gains. During the terrible war against Hannibal the people had allowed the senate to run the state. Although the government remained in theory a democracy, in practice it was now an oligarchy. The tribunes, guardians of the people's rights, became mere "yes men" of the senate. The landless populace lost all interest in good government just so long as

the politicians supplied food and circuses in return for their votes.

**The influence of Greece.** One of the most important results of the conquest of the Mediterranean was the Hellenization of Roman culture. In the well-known lines of the poet Horace, "Captive Greece took her barbarian conqueror captive." Contact with the superior and more sophisticated culture of Greece had its beneficial results. A new refinement appeared among certain classes in Rome. Greek teachers were imported to enrich the educational curriculum, and Roman writers were inspired to imitate Greek literary models. The crude buildings of Rome took on a new elegance as her architects strove to imitate the models of Athens.

Such innovations were all to the good, but in the main the Romans imitated Greek vices rather than Greek virtues. The philosophy



A small farmer brings his wares to the public market in this relief from Augustan Rome.

of Epicureanism was misinterpreted as an excuse for self-indulgence. Greek individualism, when adopted by the Romans, led to a decay of the old Roman traits of discipline, simplicity, and respect for authority. Rome became thronged with returned war veterans convinced that the state owed them a living. The city swarmed with fortune hunters, dandies, and fops, with thousands of imported domestic slaves, and with discontented, unemployed farmers.

**Roman weaknesses.** Such were the problems that faced the Romans as they entered a century (133-33 B.C.) that was to see the streets of Rome red with the blood of thousands of her citizens killed in civil strife, a succession of dictators, and the end of the republic. Thus as Rome neared the end of the second century B.C., the bulk of the population in Italy was impoverished and landless, government was controlled by a wealthy, selfish clique, and the old city-state system of government in the hands of the senate had proved itself unable to cope with the problems of governing a great world state. The need of solving internal weaknesses was made more urgent by disquieting rumors of savage Germanic tribes north of Italy whose hordes of wild soldiery now threatened the frontier of the empire.

**The people against the senate.** The land problem brought on a long and bloody struggle between the plebeians and the senate. The common people had begun a drive for a solution of the land problem before the Second Punic War. At the end of the conflict with Hannibal the tribune Licinius, a devoted friend of the people, had a law enacted by the plebeian assembly that no man could own more than five hundred acres of public land acquired by conquest. It seems that wealthy nobles had appropriated government lands illegally. So strong was the power of the nobles, however, that the Licinian Law became a dead letter.

The people secured a new champion in Tiberius Gracchus. Elected tribune in 133 B.C., the new leader was the scion of one of Rome's best families, a grandson of the great Scipio, who had triumphed at the battle of Zama. To Gracchus' way of thinking, the most pressing need of his country was the revival of agriculture. He gave many speeches before the common people, stressing their sacrifices as soldiers

and comparing their services to the state with their present impoverishment. "You fight and die to give wealth and luxury to others. You are called the masters of the world; yet there is no clod of earth that you can call your own."<sup>2</sup> Gracchus succeeded in having a new law passed, the benevolent aim of which was to protect the small landowners and to redivide all the public lands. The law was not enforced, and in an attempt to carry on the work of social reform Tiberius Gracchus and three hundred of his followers were slain in a riot by the overzealous supporters of the senate.

In 123 B.C. the younger brother of Tiberius was elected tribune. Gaius Gracchus also tried to solve the land problem. Gaius was more radical than his brother. He not only was interested in aiding the farmer, but he demanded that the government buy grain to sell to the unemployed in the city as well. This was the genesis of the later disastrous "dole" policy. The program of reform sponsored by Gaius met with angry opposition from the wealthy senatorial party. In 121 B.C., like his elder brother, he fell a victim of assassination in a riot. Thus two patriotic men who had sought to assist Rome's "forgotten man" were sacrificed because of the greed of a small but powerful clique.

Reform of social and economic conditions was urgent in Rome. Had the senatorial party been wise enough to make a few concessions, the economic position of the populace might have greatly improved while the nobles would still have enjoyed a privileged position. But they refused absolutely to make any concessions, thus bringing about a series of horrible wars in which many of them lost their lives and property.

**Civil war.** Not long after the death of Gaius Gracchus the people of Rome, disgusted at senatorial inefficiency in carrying on a war with Jugurtha, a ruler in north Africa, appointed Marius as the leader of the army. The people's general scored great triumphs in defeating Jugurtha and in scattering a menacing horde of German barbarians on the frontier. Marius was a friend of the people, but he was no statesman and was unable to control the extreme elements in the people's party. As a result of riots and disorder, moderate men became disgusted and supported the senate in its attempt to regain control. By this time,

however, the common people realized how they could get their way: not by recourse to the legal machinery of the republic but by following a military leader who could make good their demands.

The senate was soon faced again with war in Asia Minor and thereupon selected a general named Sulla as its leader. At the same time the people in their assembly, the *tributa*, elected Marius general of the army. It will be recalled that by the Hortensian Law the *comitia tributa* controlled the basic policy of the government, in theory at least, for it could pass legislation without the approval of the senate. In practice, however, the senate tenaciously clung to its power and ran the government very much as it willed. The rivalry between Marius and Sulla forced a show-down on the issue and exposed a fundamental weakness in the Roman machinery of government: the fact that in practice, if not in absolute theory, both the assembly representing the common man and the senate representing the aristocracy claimed to be the ultimate authority. The inevitable result of these two conflicting claims was a bitter and costly civil war.

Sulla ignored the people's choice of Marius as general by threatening Rome with his troops and forcing the assembly to pass a law that any action by that body had to secure the consent of the senate. The law made the senate the supreme authority in the state. Sulla next led his army to Asia Minor. In his absence riots broke out in Rome, and many senatorial leaders were slain. When Sulla returned, he exacted a frightful revenge against the unruly populace. A reign of terror ensued. The people's leaders were butchered, and the assembly was again made impotent. The stern military champion of the senate died a few years later (78 B.C.). His epitaph, composed by his own hand, is the best clue to his character: "No friend ever surpassed him in kindness and no enemy in mischief."<sup>3</sup>

Following the death of Sulla a new champion of the people, a military leader named Pompey, came forward. He repealed Sulla's laws against the assembly, rid the Mediterranean of pirates, and gained impressive victories in Asia Minor, resulting in the annexation of Syria as a Roman province. Following his triumphal return to Rome, Pompey was joined by a newcomer, Julius Caesar, who had

made a name for himself by supporting the repeal of Sulla's laws and praising the memory of Marius.

**Julius Caesar.** Up to now Caesar's fame had rested on his propensity for running up great debts and entertaining lavishly rather than on solid achievements of statesmanship. Yet from now on Caesar's rise to power was phenomenal. In 59 B.C. he was made consul and managed to put through a series of new land laws. By that time Caesar had a definite program of action. He was apparently the only leader of his day who realized that the old republic was dead. He believed that benevolent despotism was the only way of saving Rome from continued civil war and its great empire from falling apart. Caesar realized that military success was vital if he wished to become the people's leader. He secured the command of an army to conquer Gaul, where his military cunning achieved brilliant success and added much territory to the empire. Caesar wrote a fascinating account of his conquest in his *Commentaries on the Gallic War*. The work, with its vigorous and lucid prose, was splendid propaganda for Caesar's cause.

Historians are beginning to recognize the tremendous importance of Caesar's conquest of Gaul. The inhabitants of the area, mainly Celts mixed with Nordic and Mediterranean stock, quickly assimilated the culture of Rome and developed a high type of civilized life. When the Roman empire finally collapsed in the fifth century A.D., the hardy Gauls were able to preserve some of the classical civilization of Greece and Rome from the impact of the advancing German barbarian tribes. That is why, after the period of confusion which followed the destruction of the Roman empire, civilization revived first of all in Gallic territory.

In the face of Caesar's great achievements in Gaul Pompey became jealous, turned against his former colleague, and combined with the senate to discredit and ruin Caesar. Sensing his danger, Caesar left Gaul, crossed the Rubicon, and marched with his army on Rome (49 B.C.). Within a year a senatorial army was defeated in Rome, and Pompey was crushed in Greece. Caesar was now master of Rome.

**Caesar's rule.** During his brief period of rule (49-44 B.C.) the old republican constitu-



tion ceased to function, and a new Rome was created. On the surface Caesar retained the old governmental forms, but he held full authority. The power of the senate was weakened, the administration of the imperial provinces was improved, and political organizations whose rowdies had so often terrorized Rome were disbanded. In addition to these reforms, Caesar tried to reduce the evil of the dole system, sought to help agriculture, and improved municipal administration. One of his most important acts was the reform of the calendar which, with minor changes, is still in use today.

There were many mutterings against Caesar's reforms. There were some who still believed that the old republic should be retained and saw in Caesar only a dangerous tyrant. Others hated him because he was reducing their chances for acquiring wealth at the expense of the state. On March 15, 44 B.C., Caesar was stabbed to death in the senate house by a group of conspirators led by a general named Brutus. It was a tragic and foolhardy act. With the death of Caesar Rome was to suffer another period of civil strife.

Caesar was one of Rome's greatest citizens and indeed one of the most gifted figures in world history. His courage and leadership made him a great military genius, and he was a master of Latin prose.

**Civil war renewed.** For fourteen years after the death of Caesar, Rome was rent by civil strife. An alliance between Mark Antony, the late Caesar's friend, and Octavian, the adopted son and grandnephew of Caesar, was opposed by the armies of the conspirators led by Brutus and his friend Cassius. After these armies had been scattered, a new struggle began, this time between the former allies Antony and Octavian, who quarreled furiously and took the field against each other. The youthful heir of Caesar, barely thirty years of age, defeated his former ally in a naval engagement off the coast of Greece. The next year Octavian invaded Egypt, where Antony had fled to that country's glamorous ruler, Queen Cleopatra. The terrible century of disorder which had begun in 133 B.C. ended when Antony, faced with defeat, committed suicide, and his mistress Cleopatra, unable to turn back Octavian, did likewise. All of the Mediterranean world was at last under one ruler (see map, page 157), and two centuries of peace and progress now followed.

**Augustus and the empire.** Following his victory over Antony and the annexation of Egypt, Octavian returned to Rome in triumph. His return signalized the end of the republic after an existence of five hundred years. True, the republic had died even before Caesar's rule, but at Caesar's death there was a confused period, an interregnum, in which no one could say whether the government would become an empire or revert to a republic dominated by some short-lived military ruler. Octavian decided the question.

On the surface there was little change in the government. Octavian wisely contented himself with the realities of power, disregarding its external forms. He gave up the consulship but was granted by the senate the power of a tribune for life. In addition the senate gave him the name Augustus, meaning majestic. From now on Octavian is referred to by his new name, Augustus. Another title conferred upon Augustus was *princeps* (first citizen of the Romans), and as supreme leader of the army he was called *imperator*, from which we derive our modern term emperor.

Although the senate still functioned, Augustus wielded the military authority and controlled all legislation. One-man rule had emerged from the uncertainties of civil war. However, it was camouflaged by the retention of the old republican forms. The governmental arrangement whereby in theory both Augustus and the senate shared authority although in practice real power lay in the hands of Augustus, the *princeps*, is known as the principate. The office of *princeps* allowed life tenure but was not hereditary. In theory it was elective, but in practice the senate had to accept nominations made by the emperors and, in many cases, the army heads.

**Reconstruction under Augustus.** Augustus was faced at the outset with the problem of removing the many evils and scars that had resulted from a century of civil strife. The job of reconstruction was a task that demanded great statesmanship. The general run of Roman citizens had just about lost confidence in their government and in the destiny of their country. Many of the provinces were depopulated and had been ravaged by war. The aristocracy was in many respects selfish and unpatriotic. In the cities an unemployed mob had been kept on free bread and circuses and had long ago lost any interest in

work. On the frontiers were large armies, many quite undisciplined, some of which were toying with the idea of setting their candidates on the imperial throne.

Augustus wisely concentrated on these internal problems and did not try to extend the empire's territories. He did, however, extend Roman control to the Danube as a defensive measure against the danger of barbarian invasion. During the long reign of Rome's first princeps, administration was improved in the provinces, law and order were revived throughout the land, and a trained and loyal body of civil servants was established. Taxation was made more efficient and just, and the finances of the empire were placed on a sound basis.

**The Julian Caesars.** When Augustus died in 14 A.D. after a glorious and successful reign, he was followed by four descendants of his family, the line of the Julian Caesars. Of these emperors Tiberius and Claudius were reasonably efficient and devoted rulers. But of the other two, one, Caligula, was a madman who, among other whimsies, made his horse a consul. The other, Nero, was a monster infamous for his persecution of the Christians, his immoralities, and the murder of his wife and his mother.

**The Flavian emperors.** The Julian Caesars ended their rule in 69 A.D. and were followed by the Flavian emperors. For thirty years that imperial line gave the empire reasonably good, if not brilliant, rule. Vespasian saw to it that the provinces were administered justly and improved the defenses of the Rhine-Danube frontier. Domitian, the last of the Flavians, paid special attention to the defenses of the northern frontier. By the time of his rule the subterfuge of the principate, in which the senate enjoyed the empty forms of authority and the princeps the real essence of power, was becoming more and more a meaningless fiction. Domitian was a thorough autocrat. He demanded, for example, that he be addressed as lord and god. Roman government now was, for all intents and purposes, a monarchy passed from father to son, in which the worship of the emperor was carried out as a part of the duties of citizenship.

**The Antonines.** In 96 A.D. the Flavian period was followed by that of the "five good emperors." The Roman empire in this period, the age of the Antonines, reached the height of its prosperity and power. In fact, later his-

torians, such as the famous eighteenth-century writer Edward Gibbon, have looked upon the age of the Antonines as that in which the human race reached the acme of happiness. It is a bold statement, but there is no denying that few lines of rulers in history, if any, can show more devotion to duty and strength of character than the Antonines.

Three Antonine emperors are especially worthy of notice. Trajan, whose reign extended from the years 98 to 117 A.D., was famous for his military exploits and for his ambitious building program in Rome. Trajan conquered territory north of the lower Danube and made it a Roman province. Held by Roman legions for little more than a century and a half, this area nevertheless was strongly influenced by its brief contact with Roman culture. Even today, the inhabitants of the region call themselves Rumanians.

Trajan was succeeded by Hadrian, one of the ablest of all Roman emperors. His reign extended from 117 to 138 A.D. During this time no attempt was made to extend the boundaries, the main emphasis being on the improvement of the governmental machinery.

Marcus Aurelius, who better than most rulers approached Plato's ideal of the "philosopher-king," ascended the throne in 161 A.D. The last ruler of the Antonine age was faced, six years after becoming emperor, with the peril of German barbarian tribes breaking through the northern frontier. The invasion was met successfully, but Marcus Aurelius was forced to continue fighting against the German tribes until his death in 180 A.D. The scholar-emperor would have preferred the quiet contemplation of his books rather than the blood and brutality of the battlefield. Marcus Aurelius was of saintly character, devoted to the state, and a lover of philosophy. While on his campaigns against the Germans, he wrote his *Meditations*, a little volume of philosophical musings notable for its lofty idealism and love of humanity. No successor to the imperial throne was so fine a man or so devoted to the service of the state.

**Decline of the empire.** The overthrow of the nonfunctioning republic and the advent of one-man rule had brought the Roman world two centuries of peace, from the establishment of the principate by Augustus in 30 B.C. to the invasions of the German hordes about 170 A.D., in the reign of Marcus Aurelius. Following the

death of the last Antonine emperor the empire quickly declined. For a century after the rule of the "philosopher-king" the empire was rent by internal revolution and increasing pressure from the barbarians on the frontiers. Then followed a brief period of restoration and reorganization, from 284 to 337 A.D., under the

emperors Diocletian and Constantine. Their efforts, however, only slowed down the process of collapse. The next one hundred fifty years witnessed the disintegration of governmental authority, the defeat of Roman armies, and the tramp of German barbarian invaders in the Roman capital city.

### *The Significance of the Roman World-State*

**The Roman empire.** Let us retrace our steps to the time when the empire was vigorous and strong, when it reached the pinnacle of power under the Antonine Caesars. Under Hadrian there existed forty-five provinces containing some seventy-five million people. Careful imperial organization further divided each province into smaller units called dioceses. The inset on the map opposite shows how the province of Gaul (modern France) is subdivided in this fashion. The empire had been created by force, and the Roman militarism which subjugated so many people has often been severely attacked. One such critic, for example, maintains that the Roman conquest of peoples and territories "was the chief source of that tradition of the prestige and glory of warfare which has cursed society throughout the whole period since Roman days."<sup>4</sup>

But emphasis upon Roman militarism should not cause us to minimize certain positive contributions to civilization resulting from this era of empire-building. For the first time in history a great world-state was created in which many varied races and nationalities lived in peace and harmony with each other, unmolested from attack from outside the frontiers. The Romans gave the western world unity, law, and order. Only unity made possible the spread of Greek culture throughout the Mediterranean world.

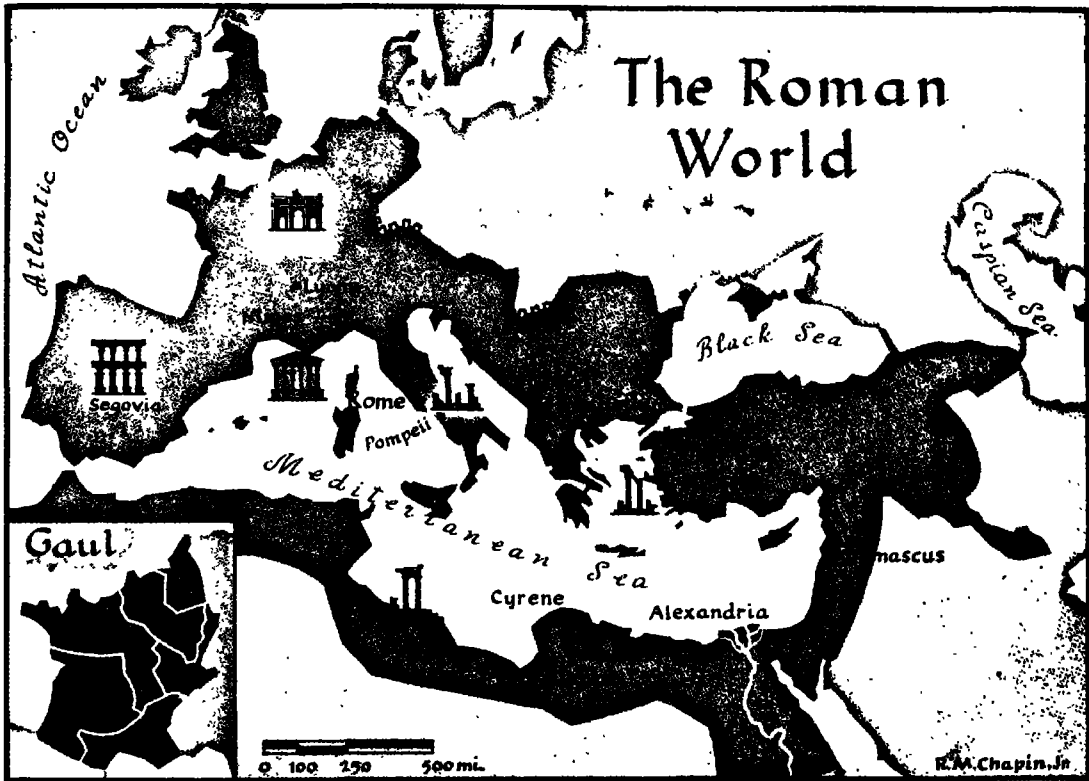
The Romans did not establish a narrow national empire. People were allowed to retain their own customs and creeds. A considerable amount of local self-government was also permitted. By 212 A.D. the great majority of the freemen of the empire enjoyed Roman citizenship. Syrians, Egyptians, Spaniards, and Gauls had little difficulty in finding service in the legions or in the civil service of the empire. Most of the empire's population lived in cities which were called city-states (*civitates*). In them the citizens elected their own officials,

and local municipal councils administered the laws. In general, within the confines of the empire there was no attempt to make the people conform to any single type of religion or philosophy.

✓ The maintenance of diversity and variety within unity was the greatest achievement of Rome. During medieval times, as we shall see in later chapters, some thinkers, disturbed by constant petty warfare, longed to re-create the unity and order of Rome. Their desire explains the attempts to reestablish a new empire on the Roman model in 800 A.D. by Charlemagne and again in 962 A.D. by Otto the Great.

**Contributions in government.** The Romans created the political framework of modern Europe. Many administrative divisions now found in modern Europe, such as the parish, province, and county, are derived from Rome, and in some instances the boundaries of the divisions are little changed from those that existed in the days of the Caesars. As we shall note in the next chapter, the universal Christian Church of the Middle Ages modeled its organization after the empire of the Caesars. Compare the Roman organization of Gaul with the ecclesiastical organization of the same area shown on the map on page 341. The lasting influence of the Romans in government is further illustrated by many political terms which we use today: fiscal, senate, consul, plebiscite, citizen, municipal, census, and many others.

✓ In political theory the works of such writers as Cicero and Seneca contain the germs of many theories of government popular in later centuries: the social-contract theory (that government originated as a voluntary agreement among citizens), the idea of popular sovereignty (that all power ultimately resides with the people), the principle of the separation of powers (that the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of the government should be



kept separate—an idea that was incorporated in our own constitution) and the belief in the equality and brotherhood of man. The despotism of the Roman emperors in the last phase of the empire also laid a strong tradition for the theory of the divine right of kings promulgated by Alexander the Great. Other governmental innovations of the Romans were the development of an efficient civil service and the creation of a model system of local government. .]

**Roman law.** Of the contributions made by the Romans in government and politics, Roman law is preëminent. Abundant evidence of the fact exists today. Two great legal systems, Roman law and English common law, enjoy a monopoly in most modern civilized nations. The Roman law is the basis for the law codes of Italy, France, Spain, Japan, Scotland, and the Latin-American countries. In addition, it has strongly affected the development of Mohammedan law, and the legal systems in Holland and South Africa show Roman influence. It also strongly influenced the law of the medieval Church, called canon law. Many legal terms in the English common law

are taken from the Latin, such as *posse*, *habeas corpus*, *juror*, *mandamus*, and *stare decisis*. The law of equity was especially based on Roman maxims. International law has borrowed many principles inherent in Roman law. Roman influence in international law is attested by the common use of such Latin terms as *de facto*, *status quo*, *casus belli*, and *jus soli*. The English common law is found in England, Ireland, the United States (with the exception of Louisiana), Canada (with the exception of the French-speaking province of Quebec), Australia, and New Zealand, and in many of the non-self-governing colonies in the British Empire.

Roman law evolved slowly over a period of about one thousand years. At first, when Rome was a struggling little city-state, the law was unwritten, mixed with religious custom, narrow in its point of view and harsh in its judgments. As Rome became more prosperous and life consequently became more complex, the law was gradually separated from religion. In other words, the law was secularized, and the *jus divinum* (divine law) became the *jus civile* (the civil code, or the law of the

city). In 449 B.C. upon the demand of the plebeians, the law was written in the Laws of the Twelve Tables.

The next step in Roman judicial development was the expansion of judicial machinery. In the fourth century B.C. a special official, the *praetor urbanus*, was established to conduct trials. Under the guidance of the praetors, the Roman law was expanded to meet new conditions and problems. Upon assuming office every praetor drew up his edict, which stated the maxims of law he would adhere to during the term of his office. The edicts were based on the old law, but in addition new principles and usages were introduced if the praetor thought them necessary.

The acquisition of an empire brought under Roman rule many different kinds of people, each with its distinct customs and laws. To meet the situation, a new official, called the *praetor peregrinus*, was created in 242 B.C. This officer had charge of courts where non-Romans were concerned. The new *praetor* had to take into consideration many different kinds of custom. In a word, he had to range far outside the *jus civile* in seeing that justice was meted out to non-Romans. As a result a new kind of law, the *jus gentium* (law of nations) developed that could be applied to all foreigners. It soon became recognized that the law of nations was much more elastic and comprehensive than the old Roman civil law, whether the case concerned Romans or foreigners. Consequently the civil law became denationalized. Enriched by the *jus gentium* it developed into a system of law that was applicable to the whole empire. The *jus gentium* had conquered the *jus civile*.

**Codification of the law.** By the fourth century A.D. a great mass of law had accumulated, and it was getting increasingly hard to use. The logical answer was codification; the legal

system could be systematized and reduced to fundamental principles. During the first two centuries of the empire a remarkable series of jurists carried on the work of systematizing the law. These men were greatly influenced by Stoic philosophy with its conception of a humane, rational, and natural law applicable to all mankind. The law was humanized, and the test of any law, wherever it might exist, was considered to be "what a man of common sense and good faith would deem to be right." The process of codification saw the adoption of many legal principles borrowed from the *jus naturale* (natural law). Thus the once primitive and narrow law of the small city-state of Rome evolved into a humane and comprehensive legal system that filled the needs of a world-state. ✓

After several attempts to achieve a complete codification of the law, the emperor Justinian, between the years 528 and 534, made a compilation of Roman law from all sources. This work of codification and systematization enabled the Roman law to be condensed in a few volumes and thus easily preserved for posterity.

**The role of the Romans.** The poet Virgil sums up the role of the Romans thus:

Others will mold their bronzes to breathe  
with a tenderer grace,  
Draw, I doubt not, from marble a vivid life  
to the face,  
Plead at the bar more deftly, with sapient  
words of the wise,  
Trace heaven's courses and changes, predict  
us stars to arise.  
Thine, O Roman, remember, to reign over  
every race!  
These be thine arts, thy glories, the ways of  
peace to proclaim,  
Mercy to show to the fallen, the proud with  
battle to tame!<sup>5</sup>

### *Life under the Antonines*

**Roman prosperity.** Under the five good emperors of the age of the Antonines (96-180 A.D.), the Roman empire reached the height of its prosperity and power. Never before had the people of the western world enjoyed such peace and economic advancement. Industry expanded, cities increased in population, and commerce flourished. Never before in the history of the world had such a large

part of Europe, Asia, and Africa been so prosperous, contented, and well governed.

**Roman cities.** Wherever possible, the Romans strengthened old cities in the areas they conquered, or if none existed, they built new cities. The entire empire was a huge collection of city-states. Of course the premier city of the empire was Rome, at the end of Hadrian's reign the most magnificent city in the

world. Following the period of civil wars which preceded the principate, Augustus had set about to make Rome a capital worthy of a world empire. He boasted that he found it built of brick and left it of marble. A new Rome rose, adorned with massive and beautiful buildings largely based on Greek and oriental models. Augustus and his successors created an imperial city possessing impressive civic buildings, temples, stadiums, forums, and triumphal arches. Rome was now the administrative center of a huge empire. The Roman officials responsible for the administration and defense of the empire worked in the dozens of governmental buildings. From north, east, south, and west, orders and governmental messages poured into the imperial capital on the Tiber River.

In the provinces there were also great, thriving cities such as Alexandria, Ephesus, Antioch, Pergamum, and Lyons. On the edge of the desert in Syria and in north Africa prosperous and populous cities grew and flourished under beneficent Roman rule. In southern France numerous cities were founded, such as Nîmes, where one can still see a great Roman amphitheater, a beautiful temple, and a famous bridge-aqueduct, the Pont du Gard. Roman city-states were also created in north France, Spain, and Britain. The names of such modern English cities as Dorchester and Chester betray their Roman origin, for *chester* comes from the Latin *castra*, meaning a military camp. Nearly all of the provincial cities tried to keep up with the mother city, Rome. They installed efficient water systems fed by huge aqueducts; they laid down paved streets and built baths, stadiums, and forums.

**Roman roads.** One of the greatest achievements of the Romans was their solidly built roads. A network of splendid trunk roads connected all parts of the empire with Rome. It is said that the speed of travel possible on the highways was not surpassed until about 1800. If one traveled along one of the great imperial trunk roads of Rome, one would see regiments of soldiers marching to their posts on the frontier, numerous peddlers making their way from village to village with their wares, caravans of goods bringing luxuries to Rome from Alexandria, horse-drawn coaches of wealthy travelers, and mounted imperial messengers bringing dispatches to the emperor from distant provincial governors.

**Farming.** Although the city was the dominant influence in Roman life, agriculture remained the basic economic activity in the empire. The small farmer was disappearing. The general drift, which later was to become so serious, was toward absentee ownership of huge estates. On these tracts large numbers of *coloni*, free tenants, tilled the soil. The *coloni* were gradually superseding the slaves, who were becoming increasingly hard to secure.

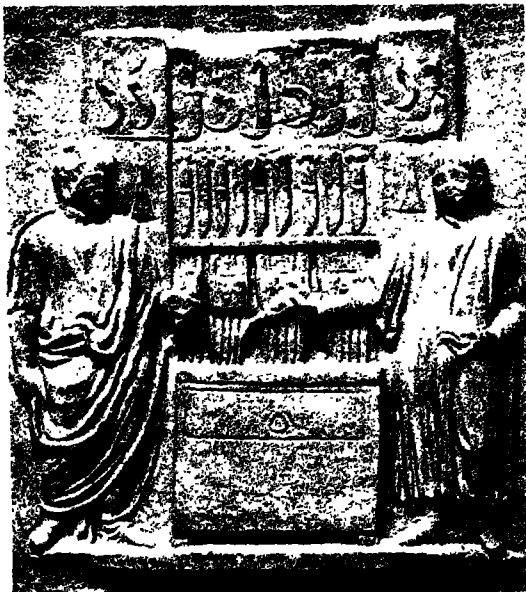
**Commerce.** Trade flourished as never before. On the sea most of the pirates had been exterminated. Ships now sailed the Mediterranean in perfect safety. Some of the vessels not only carried large cargoes but in addition could accommodate several hundred passengers. It took ten days for a ship to cover the twelve hundred miles between Rome and Alexandria. About a week sufficed to get a cargo to Athens, an eight-hundred mile voyage.

Commerce was now more diversified and extensive than at any previous time in history. Banking and credit machinery made important advances, facilitating trading ventures. Extensive trade with China was carried on (see map, page 282), largely as a result of a trade commission sent by the Han emperor to the Roman province of Syria in 97 A.D. A fleet of more than one hundred boats plied between the Red Sea and Tamil Land in India. Upon arrival at Red Sea ports, the goods were shipped across the desert to Alexandria, the most important commercial center of the empire. Traders also made their way to the northern shores of Europe and to Britain.

The Romans in Italy exported comparatively little, but so much revenue and wealth



*Roman settlers in the Rhine valley in the time of Caesar pay their taxes to a collector.*



*Two merchants exhibit their stock—a variety of knives and sickles—in this relief study.*

poured into Rome from the provinces that the Italians had the necessary purchasing power to buy immense quantities of goods from other parts of the empire. Grain was one of the most important of Roman imports, and in addition there were works of art for the wealthy, textiles, silk, cotton, perfume, jewels, and papyrus.

**Industry.** The growth of industry went hand in hand with the expansion of trade. Extensive mining operations were carried on north of the Danube, in Spain, and in Britain. In Gaul the development of industry was of notable importance, especially the making of pottery. Industry also flourished in the eastern Mediterranean. While Greece seemed to lag behind, Asia Minor enjoyed a profitable trade in purple dyes, carpets, and tents, Syria exported its glassware and leather goods, and Alexandria dealt in perfumes, embroideries, gems, and cosmetics.

Industry in the days of the Roman empire advanced largely because of secondary influences. There was less war, and communications were kept in better repair and were less frequently interrupted. But there were no fundamental improvements in the methods and organization of industry itself. There was little improvement in technology. Machinery never supplanted handicrafts. The develop-

ment of large-scale production, and with it standardization of commodities, saw but little advance. Industry in the Roman empire was organized on a small-shop basis.

Another important characteristic was its decentralization. The lack of patent laws enabled businessmen in any small locality to copy the wares of any other manufacturer. Furthermore there was insufficient purchasing power among the common people, and the cost of distributing goods over long distances was high.

The common sense showed by the Romans in government was not so apparent in industry or commerce. However, while unable to compete with such contemporary peoples as the Syrians, Greeks, and Egyptians in business, the Romans did contribute the peace and unity essential for economic progress. Commerce and industry under the Antonines reached a height not exceeded for nearly a thousand years.

**Rome.** The best place to observe Roman life was in the capital of the empire, Rome itself. At the pinnacle of its prosperity it had about one million inhabitants and an area about three miles square. If a visitor mounted one of the city's seven hills, Rome would have been spread before him, a complex panorama of great buildings, domes, immense triumphal arches, and marble columns, a profusion of red-tiled roofs, and patches of green here and there that denoted the existence of public parks and private gardens. A walk through the great city would have given an impression of both magnificence and tawdriness. The city was crowded, the streets narrow. Because so many of the poorer classes lived in squalid tenements and were unemployed, the streets were jammed with swarms of idlers who passed their time gossiping and gambling. All manner and varieties of people jostled each other in the narrow streets: slave messengers, dignified Greek philosophers, blond German youths clad in rude skins, elegant white-robed Arabs, soldiers of the praetorian guard, hucksters selling their wares, shifty-eyed scoundrels out to make a dishonest penny, and proud senators clad in spotless togas. Rome "had, in fact, become the center and crucible for everything good and bad in the huge, teeming Mediterranean world."<sup>6</sup>

Some seven thousand police were employed to maintain order, but at night few honest citizens dared to venture down the winding streets

without proper guard. In the poor section of the city the walls of buildings were covered with scribblings. Wall writing served as a convenient method of leaving a message for a friend, taunting an enemy with a nasty insult, or giving vent to romantic sentiments. (Many of these wall scribblings were found in Pompeii, where they had been preserved when that city was buried by a volcanic eruption of Mount Vesuvius. We infer that similar remarks were scribbled on Roman walls but have not been preserved.) One such inscription at Pompeii read:

If any man should seek  
My girl from me to turn,  
On far-off mountains bleak,  
May Love the scoundrel burn!<sup>7</sup>

And another:

"A blonde girl taught me to hate brunettes, and I will hate them if I can—but loving them would come so much easier."<sup>8</sup>

**The people of the city.** The great majority of the populace, the plebeians, lived in overcrowded wooden tenements, some of them four stories high. The structures were fire traps and occasionally collapsed because of poor construction. It is little wonder that the plebeians were always moving from one tenement to the other in their search for better housing. Rome was well described as "a city of inveterate flat-hunters."<sup>9</sup>

A large majority of the populace were dependent upon state support in whole or in part. There were many plebeians, however, who managed to make a fairly good living working as artisans. These workers usually belonged to *collegia*, or guilds. There were about eighty distinct guilds, each comprising the workers of one trade. The *collegia* were dominantly social rather than economic in purpose. The guild provided a social hall for its members, cared for the sick, and arranged for feasts and celebrations. Unlike the modern trade union, there was no thought of collective bargaining, of controlling the training of apprentices, and of such matters as wages or hours of work.

It is estimated that the slaves comprised fifty per cent of the population of Rome. While those in domestic service were often treated humanely, conditions among slaves on the large plantations were indescribably harsh.

Insufficient food, poor shelter, often quite inadequate to keep out the cold and rain,



*A Roman apothecary fills a prescription in this ancient drug store, while his wife keeps store.*

long hours of work, and frequently the lash of the whip were the lot of some slaves. Fortunately many slaves succeeded in gaining their freedom. Wealthy men often rewarded long years of efficient service by emancipation. Freed men frequently became successful in business and made names for themselves in the lower offices of government.

At the top of the social order were the old senatorial families, country gentry who obtained their income from large estates. With the coming of the empire, the aristocracy tended to lose its power and influence to the wealthy men of business who belonged to the order of *equites*, or knights. The latter class was soon dominated by families who had risen from lowly circumstances and who spent much of their time trying to show the real aristocrats that they "had arrived."

In contrast with the squalid and bare tenements of the poor, the homes of the rich were palatial, built around courts in which were beautiful gardens. Around the main court, or atrium, were the principal rooms, which had marble walls, mosaics on the floors, heavy curtains, and numerous objects of art. Where we today use wallpaper, the Romans adorned their walls with frescoes, paintings of gardens





*The master shakes his fist at an impudent late-comer in a Roman school, and the other pupils snicker.*

and landscapes. They were often garish and loud in color, but occasionally they were in exquisite taste. Excavations at Pompeii have revealed at least four thousand of these frescoes. An interesting aspect of the furniture found in the Roman houses was the abundance of couches and absence of chairs. The people did not sit but usually reclined, even at meals.

There were many refined and dignified Romans, especially among the old landed gentry, but the newly rich made vulgar spectacles of themselves. In addition to extravagant spending for palatial houses, for costly dress, jewels, and perfumes, many of the upper classes made eating an end in itself. Perhaps the most famous of all Roman gourmands was the emperor Vitellius, who loved eating so much that he became expert at administering emetics so that he could eat at least four huge meals every day. Vitellius was such an exacting critic of fine foods that his friends never dared ask him to dinner unless they were prepared to spend mammoth sums of money for the necessary choice wines and exotic delicacies.

**Public entertainment.** All people, rich and poor alike, patronized the sports and the baths. The unemployed, who became more and more numerous in the latter days of the empire, demanded free entertainment. The most important of the public amusements were the chariot races that took place in the circuses and the gladiatorial shows offered in the amphitheaters and arenas. Much less popular than these spectacles were the plays presented in the theaters.

Sports were much more brutal and professionalized in Rome than they were in Greece. It has been said that the only civilized and decent sport practiced by the Romans was chariot racing. Modern horse racing is prob-

ably not nearly so spectacular as those races. They were held in the immense race course called the Circus Maximus, which held at least 150,000 spectators. Two dozen races constituted a usual day's racing. While the contests were in progress, pandemonium reigned among the vast throng, many of whom had wagered on the outcome.

The gladiatorial contests in the Colosseum (page 172) were the most popular spectacles in Rome. These cruel and horrible Roman contests have no exact counterpart in any other civilization. A day's program might include several types of combat. First there might be a criminal placed in the arena, with a small sword for protection. In a few minutes a large lion would be released. Against such a beast the poor wretch had little chance. Next the arena would be filled with an assortment of wild beasts, and a large group of gladiators would then enter to slay them. After the carcasses of the beasts and the gladiators killed by the animals had been dragged from the arena, a few chariots would enter, and a desperate duel would ensue as the drivers paired off, each seeking an antagonist.

After numerous bloody combats the finale was reached when ten *retiarii* (netters) and ten Thracians (heavily armed warriors) marched into the arena. The former were nimble fighters carrying nothing but a long three-pronged lance and a net. They wore no armor. The Thracians were armored and carried immense swords. The netters danced around, trying to cast their nets over the helmets of the waddling Thracians. If the cast of the net miscarried, the netter had to run for safety. The audience went into a frenzy when a Thracian had a netter on the run. Some bet on the agility of the unarmored warrior; others backed the slow-moving Thracian. So it went on hour after hour. The sand in the arena became splotted with red, and the fumes of blood were penetrating. Not many gladiators now remained of the hundred or more who had marched into the arena and sworn to die as was proper for gladiators. The women were apparently just as bloodthirsty as the men and shouted, "*Occide, occide*"—"Kill, kill"—as vociferously as their male companions.

Special schools flourished for the training of the gladiators. These super-fighters enjoyed a brief period of fame. While a gladiator enjoyed the popularity of Rome, he was the talk

of the town. Wall writings referred to him as "The Maiden's Sigh" and "The Glory of the Girls." It is also said that the more a famous gladiator was cut and scarred the more the

women ran after him. All Rome turned out to see a good gladiatorial contest. These games reveal the streak of cruelty that must have been part of the Roman character.

## *The Romans As Builders*

**Motives for building.** The Romans were among the finest builders of ancient times. Several reasons explain this distinction. For one thing, the administrative needs of an extensive empire necessitated the building of road systems, bridges, sewers, and aqueducts. Moreover, the imperial capital with its numerous governmental agencies called for the erection of huge and pretentious public buildings. Pride of empire also led to the erection of ostentatious monuments that symbolized the dignity and the might of the Roman state.

The most characteristic architectural form in ancient Greece was the temple. The Greeks exhibited a deep love of beauty and used their talents to glorify the gods. In contrast, the practical Romans specialized in imposing public buildings. Their forte was not temples but rather great public baths, amphitheaters, and forums. Most of the basic elements of Roman architecture were borrowed from other peoples, such as the column, adopted from the Greeks, and the arch, taken perhaps from the Etruscans, perhaps from Mesopotamia. When Rome conquered the eastern Mediterranean, Greek architectural and artistic influences became all-important. As a result, there was at first a slavish copying of Greek models, but gradually a distinctive Roman architecture and art developed which perpetuated basic Greek forms and elements but transformed them into buildings and works of art essentially Roman.

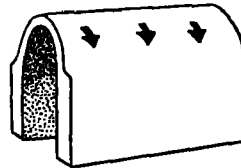
**Characteristics of Roman architecture.** Two important characteristics of Roman architecture were solidity of construction and magnificence of conception. Roman buildings were built to last, and their vastness, grandeur, and decorative richness aptly symbolized the proud imperial spirit of Rome. Sumptuousness, splendor, and complexity of plan were also characteristic of Roman architecture. The severe Greek structures were too simple for the Romans, who loved elaborate ornamentation. The Greek column was extensively used both for support and for decoration, but

the Romans preferred the ornate Corinthian rather than the Doric or the Ionic column. Many of our modern public buildings are copied very largely from Roman models.

**Roman building methods.** For spanning openings Roman builders used the arch extensively and daringly. For roofing large areas they extended the arch into a vault (see diagram). This extension of the arches, called a barrel vault, required very thick walls. It had been used in Mesopotamia, but the Romans used it much more extensively. Later the Romans discovered that the vault could be intersected with arched openings. This discovery led to the development of the intersecting vault, which required support at only a few places instead of all along the walls (as the diagram shows). We shall see how this development affected Roman methods of construction. It remained for the builders of the medieval period to develop vaulting to its greatest height and delicacy.

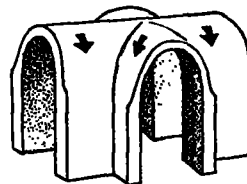
The Romans employed certain techniques of masonry which are in use today. Builders

A BARREL VAULT is a continuous series of arches forming a tunnel-like structure.



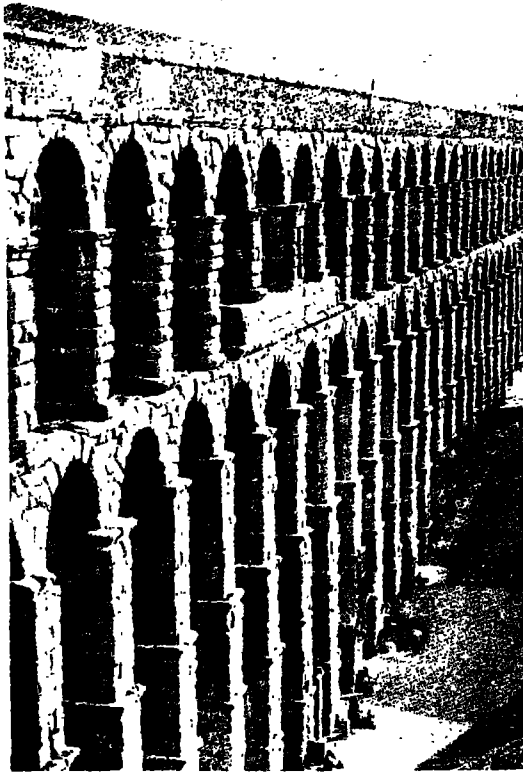
Its walls must be thick and strong to support the sidewise and downward pressure of the material above.

AN INTERSECTING VAULT occurs where two barrel vaults meet at right angles,



permitting openings in the supporting walls for windows. These openings may be filled with rubble since they need not support weight from above.





"DEVIL'S BRIDGE"—ROMAN AQUEDUCT AT  
SEGOVIA, SPAIN

used concrete extensively, a material which was rediscovered only recently. They also used rubble (small stones, bricks), stucco, and veneer. The development of the intersecting vault allowed the builder to carry the weight of the roof on small sections of strong masonry. The space between had merely to be filled in with rubble or brick and then veneered with marble, which was naturally cheaper than building with solid marble. The marble was then cut to look like solid masonry. This deception is used today when steel carries the strain of buildings and the filler of concrete is marked to make it look like block masonry. The Romans also used stucco as a cover for the rubble.

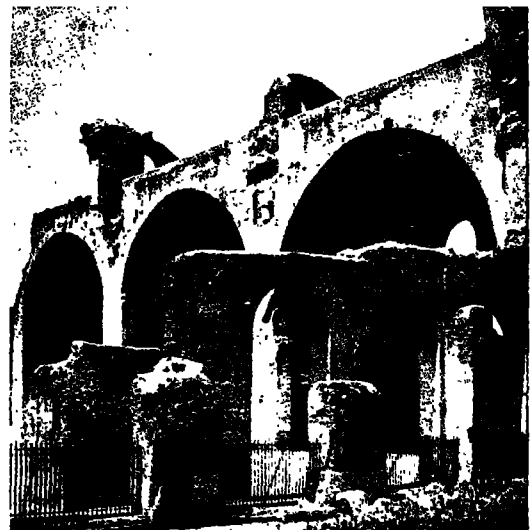
**Roman public works.** In bridges and aqueducts the Romans put a series of arches next to each other so that they could support each other and finally carry the thrusts to the ground. "Devil's Bridge," built to supply the city of Segovia with water, shows the tremendous size of the typical Roman aqueduct (compare it with the figures standing at the foot)

and illustrates the construction and function of the arch. This famous aqueduct is still in use today.

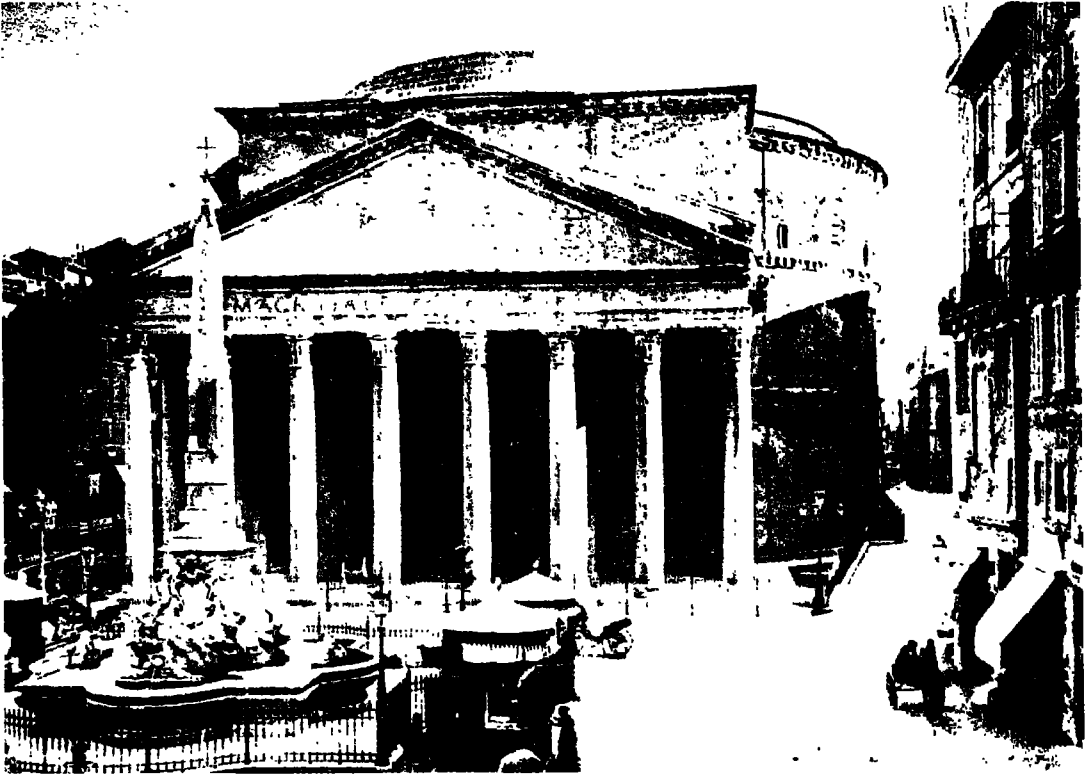
As road builders the Romans surpassed all previous peoples. Their roads were carefully planned for strategic and administrative purposes, constructed according to sound engineering principles, and kept in constant repair. One of the earliest main Roman highways was the Appian Way, built to connect Rome with cities to the south. Later the Flaminian Way was built running northeast from Rome to the Adriatic, connecting with other roads to the northern provinces. In addition to their achievements as aqueduct, bridge, and road builders, the Romans showed great skill and daring in constructing dams, reservoirs, and harbors.

**Types of buildings.** The Greeks evolved the temple, theater, and stadium as basic architectural forms. The Romans contributed the triumphal arch, bath, basilica, amphitheater, and storied apartment house. The triumphal arch symbolized the glory and might of the empire. The two arches near the Colosseum shown in the picture on page 172 are typical Roman triumphal arches. The Romans also used columns to commemorate their imperial heroes and their national achievements. These were customarily single shafts set on pedestals.

Every large Roman city possessed its baths. They were huge, showy buildings containing



BASILICA OF CONSTANTINE, ROMAN FORUM



THE PORTICO OF THE PANTHEON AT ROME

many rooms and high, wide halls, giving an impression of spaciousness and splendor. The baths usually had an open court for games and exercise, a dressing room, a warm room, hot baths, and a cold-water plunge. In addition there were lounge rooms for gossiping and idling, lecture halls, and libraries. The baths were the counterpart of our modern clubs. They were patronized by both rich and poor. An old Roman inscription states "The bath, wine, and love ruin one's health but make life worth living."

The basilica was an important Roman civic building, utilized for many purposes. A colonnaded building, it had a main central nave with barrel vaulting in the ceiling, and aisles on the sides. The central roof was elevated above the side walls to permit clerestory windows, as the Egyptians did at Karnak. Remains of these walls and windows can be seen above the central vault in the illustration opposite of the Basilica of Constantine. Rubble construction can be seen on the side wall. The influence of the Roman basilica on later archi-

tecture was very marked. In plan it contained the germ of the Gothic cathedral.

Another method applied by the Romans to roof over large areas without intermediate support was the construction of immense concrete domes. The weight of a domed roof was carried down the dome directly to the walls, and since there was no sidewise thrust, no other support was necessary. The largest of the domed structures was the Roman temple called the Pantheon, which is still in existence. Domes have been used in many later periods. They tend to give a monumental effect in public buildings—the state capitols, for example.

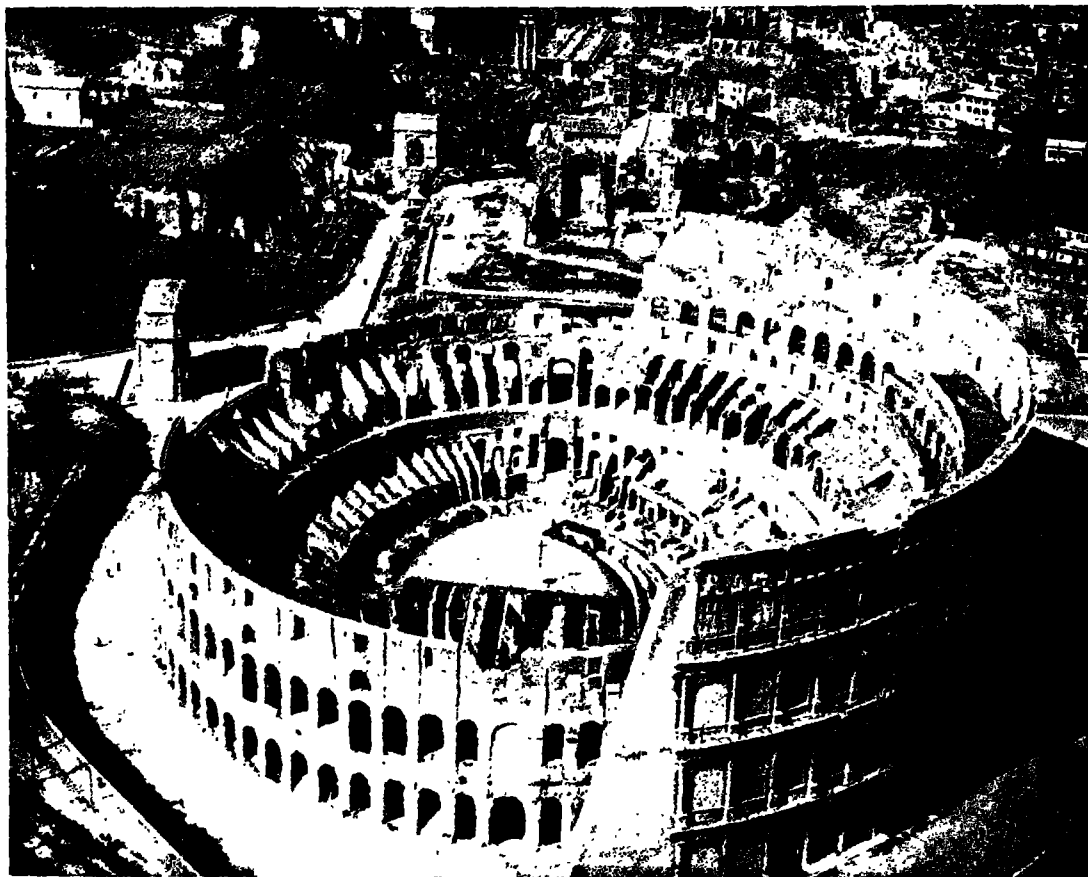
Perhaps the most famous Roman architectural edifice is the Colosseum, built late in the first century A.D. The exterior is about one quarter of a mile around, and the seating capacity is estimated to have been at least 45,000. The Colosseum utilized three stories of arches, a typical Roman feature, and for ornamental effect inserted a column between the arches. These columns are engaged—ap-

plied flat to the wall with only about a quarter of the diameter protruding. The engaged column is no longer a structural element but becomes merely decorative. In the Colosseum the three orders, Doric, Ionic, and Corinthian, have been arranged sensitively, with the heaviest at the bottom and the most ornate and delicate, the Corinthian, at the top. The decorative use of the column was characteristic of Roman architecture.

There is plentiful evidence in our modern world of the influence of the Romans as builders. Typical Roman structural principles and decoration have been used for our public buildings. Domes can be seen in government buildings, triumphal arches have been built in many of our modern capitals in imitation of those of Rome, and college football bowls still carry on the tradition of the Roman amphitheater. Sometimes these structural types have been used regardless of appropriateness.

A modern railroad station such as the Pennsylvania station in New York, modeled after the Baths of Caracalla, is an example of this dependence on ancient styles regardless of appropriateness.

*Sculpture and painting.* In other arts the Roman contribution is much less significant than in architecture. After the conquest of Greece thousands of statues and other art pieces were brought to Rome. People seemed to have a passion for art, and the homes of the wealthy were filled with all kinds of Greek art. Yet, although Roman sculpture never achieved the distinction attained by architecture, a truly Roman art did develop. At first the Romans merely copied Greek art forms, but gradually a distinctive imperial art appeared. Its most original and important expression was in portrait sculpture. The bust of Caracalla, on the opposite page, shows the strongly realistic treatment characteristic of



AN AERIAL VIEW OF THE COLOSSEUM, ROME, SHOWING TRIUMPHAL ARCHES IN THE BACKGROUND

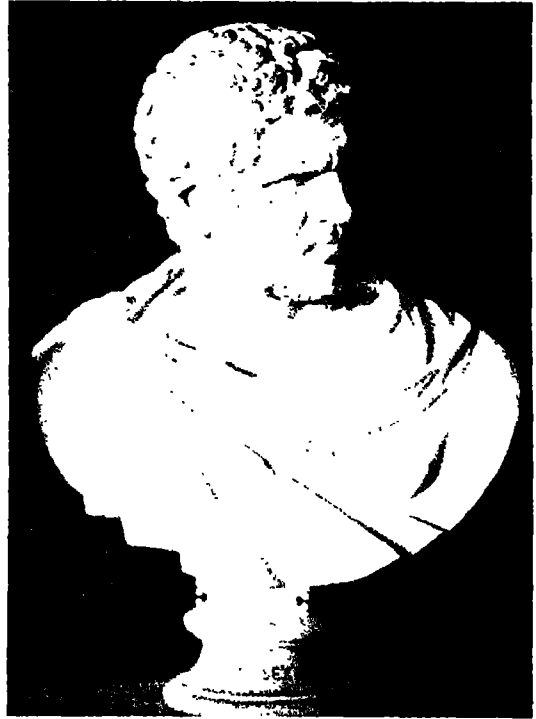


AN AUGUSTAN PENNY

Roman portraiture. Roman faithfulness to life was in contrast with Greek idealization that sought to portray types, not individuals.

The historical relief sculpture found on Roman imperial monuments is also exceptionally fine. The Romans were skilled in using reliefs to tell a story or to recount the victories of their emperors.

Other important artistic achievements of the

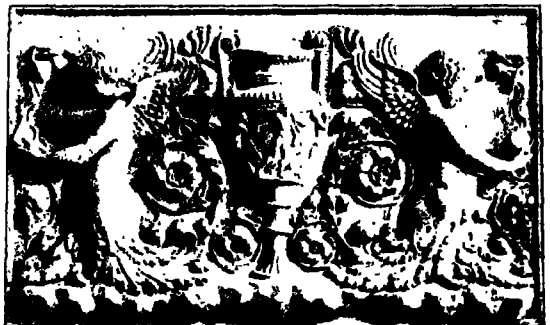


MARBLE BUST OF THE EMPEROR CARACALLA

Romans were their decorative sculpture and scrollwork, their coins, their equestrian statues, and their sculptured coffins, or sarcophagi. The Romans developed a great fund of decorative motifs such as cupids, garlands of flowers, and scrolls of various patterns. These were very popular during the Renaissance and have persisted until today. The illustration below shows a group of these motifs worked in stone. The Romans also used stucco wall decoration in distinctive fashion, and were much more realistic in their decoration than the Greeks.



PERSEUS AND ANDROMEDA, POMPEIAN FRESKO



ORNAMENTAL FRAGMENT FROM TRAJAN'S FORUM

Roman coins with relief portraits of emperors was another art which served to glorify the Roman empire. The Augustan penny illustrated on page 173 shows one of these portraits, which because of the small size of the coin had to be less realistic than the marble busts.

In painting the Romans were far advanced, although they probably used Greek models almost exclusively. They were more interested in realism in their paintings than were earlier peoples. Compare the painting of Perseus and Andromeda (page 173) with the Aegean priestess (page 111) and the Egyptian dancers (page 48). Note the three-dimensional,

rounded treatment in the Roman painting as contrasted with the flatness of earlier work. From the Romans we can get some idea of what Greek painting must have been like. The frescoes still to be seen in Pompeii and elsewhere show that the artists knew how to draw the human figure accurately and to show objects in correct perspective. Their whole approach was too realistic to allow them to take any artistic liberties with nature. The Roman influence can be seen in the early catacomb paintings, such as the one on page 390, but it was superseded in the Middle Ages by the influence of Byzantium.

### *The Romans As Writers*

**Latin literature.** The Romans turned to the Greeks for their models, in literature as in art. In poetry, for example, Roman epic, didactic, dramatic, and lyric forms were usually written in conscious imitation of Greek masterpieces. Compared with Greek literature there are few really outstanding Latin writers, and, on the whole, Latin literature must be considered inferior to Greek literature. Notwithstanding this, it is one of the world's greatest literatures. And in certain fields of literary activity, such as the didactic poem, historical writing, and satire, the Romans made substantial and original contributions. If Greek literature is unrivaled because of its brilliance, originality, and fragile beauty, Latin writing is memorable for its dignity and stateliness.

The importance of Latin literature lies in its tremendous influence upon the literature, thought, and language of western Europe. In this respect it is even more significant than Greek literature, for several reasons. Many pieces of Greek literature have been preserved to us only in Latin translation. The political power of Rome made Latin the vehicle of thought of the western world, and Latin, rather than Greek, literature influenced the development of vernacular literature in Europe.

**The formative period (300-100 B.C.).** The history of Latin literature can be divided into three main periods. The first, or formative, period included the earliest Roman drama and poetry. The most significant accomplishment in the first period of Latin literature was the beginning of Roman comedy. The writer Plautus (about 254-184 B.C.) has left us twenty plays which shed interesting light upon the

customs and manners of Rome in the third century B.C. The style of Plautus was ribald and vigorously humorous. He wrote for the common man, who greatly enjoyed his rollicking plots of illicit love, the shrewish wife, or the lovelorn youth. Plautus suggested many of the types that modern comedy has assumed, such as the farce, burlesque, and comedy of manners. From him Shakespeare got the ideas for his *Comedy of Errors* and *Merry Wives of Windsor*, and Molière, the famous seventeenth-century French dramatist, was undoubtedly influenced by Plautus. Terence (about 190-159 B.C.) has given us six polished and elegant plays. Unlike Plautus, his comedies are restrained and sophisticated and sparkle with subtle wit. Terence was too intellectual for the common people, who never accepted his plays with the same gusto they displayed for those of Plautus. Lucilius founded the art of literary satire, the one form of writing that the Romans originated. More than one thousand of his verses have survived, exposing the evils of the society of his day.

**The Golden Age: republican period.** The second age of Latin literature is known as the Golden Age. It extends from about 80 B.C. to the death of Augustus in 14 A.D. The first half of the Golden Age is called the republican period (80-31 B.C.) and contains such famous writers as Catullus, Lucretius, Cicero, and Caesar. Catullus, "the tenderest of Roman poets," wrote many beautiful lyrics and attained immortality as a master poet of love in a series of short poems. Passionately, eloquently, and sweetly, he wrote of his love for Clodia, a dissolute and unscrupulous flirt.

While originally wasted upon a worthless sweetheart, the love poems of Catullus have been enjoyed by lovers ever since.

Lucretius (99-55 B.C.) is the best-known Roman philosophical poet. In his great poem *On the Nature of Things* he brought the philosophy of Epicureanism to Rome. A combination of philosophy, science, and poetry admirably blended, *On the Nature of Things* discusses the problem of immortality, describes the evolutionary nature of the world, and anticipates the germ theory of disease and the atomic theory. Above all, Lucretius upholds philosophy as the one source of serenity and true happiness in life. Eulogizing philosophy, Lucretius wrote:

Naught sweeter than to hold the tranquil realms

On high, well fortified by sages' lore,  
Whence to look down on others wide astray—  
Lost wanderers questing for the way of life—  
See strife of genius, rivalry of rank,  
See night and day men strain with wondrous toil

To rise to utmost power and grasp the world.<sup>10</sup>

Among the prose writers of the period, Julius Caesar not only made history but also was its master narrator. The *Commentaries on the Gallic War* and those on the civil wars recount in terse, unadorned, but masterful prose the deeds of their author. The famous Cicero (106-43 B.C.) was the greatest master of Latin prose and the most important single intellectual influence in Roman history. He, more than any other writer, brought Greek thought to Rome. In matchless Latin prose, Cicero wrote books dealing with oratory, literary criticism, political theory, and philosophy. Fifty-seven complete orations of Cicero have survived, which show him to be the greatest orator of his day. Over seven hundred of his letters exist today, which throw precious light upon the problems and manners of republican Rome. The writings of Cicero influenced the Italian Humanists of the Renaissance movement in early modern times, and the stately, if sometimes ponderous, prose of Gibbon and Samuel Johnson in the eighteenth century and Cardinal Newman's essays in the nineteenth century attest to his influence.

**The Golden Age: Augustan period.** The second half of the Golden Age of Latin literature, the Augustan period, includes the work

of Virgil, Horace, Livy, and Ovid. Virgil (70-19 B.C.) was one of the world's greatest writers and probably the greatest of all Roman poets. The *Eclogues*, a number of pastoral poems, were the first important poetry produced by Virgil. Again he used the rural scene in his *Georgics*, a pastoral poem which portrays a love of the Italian countryside.

Easy quiet, a secure retreat,  
A harmless life that knows not how to cheat,  
With home-bred plenty, the rich owner bless;  
And rural pleasures crown his happiness.  
Unvex'd with quarrels, undisturb'd with noise,  
The country king his peace-fel realm enjoys.<sup>11</sup>

Virgil's masterpiece was the *Aeneid*, a work that occupied the last ten years of his life. It is a great national epic which glorifies the Julian family of emperors and eloquently asserts Rome's destiny to conquer and rule the world. Using Homer's *Odyssey* and *Iliad* as his models, Virgil recounted the fortunes of Aeneas, the legendary founder of the Latin people, who came from his home in Troy to Italy. The *Aeneid* breathes Virgil's deep and enthusiastic patriotism and is just as much a piece of imperial symbolism as are the triumphal arches of Titus and Constantine.

The Latin poet Horace (65-8 B.C.) is famous for his lyrical odes. In addition he wrote satire in verse, giving an intimate picture of Augustan society and some of its evils. Horace has always been much quoted. Here is an example of the Horatian touch from one of his *Odes* as translated by Dryden:

Happy the man—and happy he alone—  
He, who can call today his own;  
He who, secure within, can say  
Tomorrow, do thy worst, for I have lived  
today;  
Be fair, or foul, or rain, or shine,  
The joys I have possessed, in spite of Fate, are  
mine,  
Not heaven itself upon the Past has power,  
But what has been, has been, and I have had  
my hour.<sup>12</sup>

Another poet of the first rank was Ovid (43 B.C.-17 A.D.), whose main theme was love. But even he apparently tired of the subject, for his last poem on love was titled *The Cure of Love*. Ovid was above all a master storyteller, recounting much of classical mythology in fifteen books of verse called the *Metamorphoses*.



The most important prose writer in the Augustan period was Livy (59 B.C.-17 A.D.), who wrote a history of Rome entitled *From the Founding of the City*. It was the first real history of Rome, covering some seven hundred years, from the founding of the city to 9 A.D. Although only thirty-five out of 142 books of the history have survived, it remains the chief source of our information on the early history of Rome. Livy's main purpose in writing his monumental history of the Roman people was to arouse them to the dangers of soft living and to awaken in them the old virtues which had had so much to do in the building of the Roman empire.

*The Silver Age (14-117 A.D.).* The third period in Latin literature is known as the Silver Age. Most of its writers were mediocre, with the exception of Seneca (about 4 B.C.-65 A.D.), Martial (40?-102? A.D.), Juvenal (60?-140? A.D.), and Tacitus (55-120 A.D.).

Seneca, the Spanish tutor of the emperor Nero, is remembered for philosophical essays and literary tragedies modeled, none too successfully, after the great Greek dramatists. During the Renaissance in western Europe the tragedies of Seneca exercised an influence upon early French and English tragedy disproportionate to their worth.

Martial, a native of Spain, although not a really great poet, was the master of the satirical epigram, a short poem dealing with a specific subject. In the hands of Martial the epigram was a lucid and pungent weapon exposing the evils and corruption of the Rome of his day.

With Juvenal, a friend of Martial, poetic satire in Latin literature reached its height. Of the corruption in Rome Juvenal wrote:

For since their votes have been no longer  
bought,  
All public care has vanished from their  
thought,  
And those who once, with unresisted sway,  
Gave armies, empire, everything, away,  
For two poor claims have long renounced the  
whole,  
And only ask—the Circus and the Dole.<sup>13</sup>

This master of poetic invective greatly influenced the writing of the famous English satirists Pope, Dryden, and Swift. With passionate eloquence Juvenal flayed the degeneracy of Roman society, and a sense of frustration and pessimism pervades his verse.

Tacitus, like Juvenal, was concerned over the shortcomings of Rome, but he utilized history, not poetry, to focus attention upon his country's faults. In his *Germania*, a study of the Germanic tribes, he contrasts an idealized simple, wholesome people with the corrupt and immoral upper classes of Rome. In the *Annals*, a history of Rome from the death of Augustus to the death of Nero, he concentrated all his skill in painting in vivid prose the shortcomings of the emperors and their degenerate courts. Tacitus is one of the most important figures in the writing of history. He was above all a master stylist in whose hands history sparkled and glowed. Unfortunately the great historian suffered from many personal prejudices that seriously detract from the value of his work. His basic purpose was not to compile a complete record of historical events of the past but rather to dwell only upon those things of the past which could be a lesson to the present and the future.

The Silver Age came to an end in 117 A.D. From then on until the collapse of the empire in the west in the latter part of the fifth century, chaotic political conditions and general unrest prevented the creation of any great work, either in art or in literature.

*Greek writing under Roman rule.* The story of Roman expansion was written by a master historian, Polybius (204?-122? B.C.) but only five of his forty books now exist complete. He believed the main value of history was to serve as a warning and guide: "For it is history, and history alone, which . . . will mature our judgment and prepare us to take the right views."<sup>14</sup> The second century A.D. was notable for a promising revival of Greek writing. Arrian, a Greek serving as a governor in Asia Minor for the Romans, wrote his *Anabasis of Alexander*, which is an invaluable historical document, for most of the records on which Arrian based his biography are now lost. Another interesting Greek work of the second century A.D. is the *Tour of Greece* by Pausanias, a huge guidebook in which the author describes all the important statues and buildings he saw in ancient Greece.

Another interesting literary figure of the period was the Hellenistic Jew Josephus, whose writing was done in the latter decades of the first century A.D. In his *Jewish War* Josephus describes the terrible struggle be-

tween the Jews and their overlords, the Romans, and graphically describes the destruction of Jerusalem by the emperor Titus. Apparently one of his main purposes was to convey to the Jews the futility of opposing Rome.

The most famous Greek author of the period was Plutarch (46?-120? A.D.). Holding a governmental office for the Roman authority in his local city, he utilized his leisure to carry out research on the great figures in Roman and Greek history. Plutarch was interested in what we might call personality analysis; he was anxious to discover what qualities make men great or ignoble. His *Lives* contains forty-six biographies of famous Greeks and Romans. Usually these character sketches are presented in pairs for the purpose of comparison. Plutarch's *Lives* is a mine of precious information for the classical historian and is great literature as well.

**The Latin language.** The fall of Rome did not mean oblivion for the language of the Romans. For one thousand years, until the

late Middle Ages, Latin remained almost exclusively the language of literature, and it was used by scholars until the eighteenth century. Out of the Latin spoken by the common people in the Roman empire there gradually evolved during the Middle Ages the Romance languages of Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, French, and Rumanian. It is estimated that more than half our English words are of Latin origin.

The vernacular languages largely displaced Latin as the common literary medium in early modern times. But down to the nineteenth century—and even today in some European countries, such as England—Ciceronian Latin remained an important part of the educational curriculum. Latin also lives in the ritual of the Catholic Church. Rome is justly famous for its law and governmental administration, but not the least of its contributions to civilization is the logical, lucid, and sonorous language which today forms the basis for languages used by more than 200,000,000 people.

### *The Romans As Thinkers and Scientists*

**Philosophy.** In science and philosophy the Romans fell far below the Greeks. The Roman was a man of action and had little time or patience for philosophical contemplation or theorizing. The Romans made no basic and truly original philosophical discoveries but rather adapted and reshaped Greek thought for their own needs. Two schools of Greek philosophy, Epicureanism and Stoicism, especially appealed to the matter-of-fact Roman—Stoicism because of its emphasis upon self-control and Epicureanism because of its materialistic interpretation of life. It would be a mistake, however, to assume that the Romans were mere copiers of Greek philosophy, for they took over the two schools which appealed to them and gave them new vitality and power.

**Philosophers.** The foremost figures in Roman philosophical thought were Cicero, Seneca, Lucretius, and Marcus Aurelius. We have already commented on Cicero as a great orator and the master stylist of Latin prose. In addition to his purely literary activity, he was the foremost influence in the intellectual history of Rome. Cicero deeply admired Hellenistic thought, and extensive reading of the Greek philosophers and wide travel in the eastern

Mediterranean admirably prepared him for his role as the great popularizer of Greek philosophy. Cicero created the necessary philosophical terminology in Latin, preserved much Greek thought that otherwise would have been lost, and even improved in translation the quality of some of the Greek philosophers' works.

Another important figure in Roman philosophy was the Stoic thinker Seneca (4 B.C.-65 A.D.), who also was famous for his literary tragedies. Seneca was regarded with high favor by the leaders of the early Christian Church, for, more than most Roman thinkers, he came near the conception of monotheism and the doctrine of immortality. No other non-Christian emphasized as Seneca did the doctrine of service, of the obligation to forgive others their sins and to remember the brotherhood of man. The philosopher occupies an important place in the development of the moral theory in Europe. From the ninth to the thirteenth centuries his essays on philosophy enjoyed a great reputation. Dante and Chaucer show his influence, and Petrarch, first great man of letters of the Italian Renaissance, quotes him more than any other writer except Virgil.

Lucretius, whose literary significance we have noted, was also a philosopher. *On the Nature of Things* is considered one of the greatest philosophical poems in any language. It calls to men to free themselves from silly superstitions, to rely upon their own resources—since the gods have nothing to do with the fate of human beings—to face death unafraid, and to seek pleasure which consists not of sensuous gratification but of the serenity and unruffled calm of the philosopher. The philosophy of Lucretius, based upon that of his master Epicurus, is “make the most of today,” and to have no fear of death:

What has this bugbear Death to frighten man,  
If souls can die, as well as bodies can?  
For, as before our birth we felt no pain,  
When Punic arms infested land and main,  
When heaven and earth were in confusion  
hurl'd

For the debated empire of the world,  
Which awed with dreadful expectation lay,  
Soon to be slaves, uncertain who should sway:  
So, when our mortal frame shall be disjoin'd,  
The lifeless lump uncoupled from the mind,  
From sense of grief and pain we shall be free;  
We shall not feel, because we shall not be.<sup>15</sup>

**Roman Stoicism.** Stoicism as interpreted by Marcus Aurelius was a distinctively Roman philosophy of life. The goal of the Roman Stoic was right conduct; in a word, how to be poised in a world that was full of unexpected pain and sorrow. The solution advanced by Stoic thought was resignation. The individual should recognize that all things must live according to a basic law of nature. Man, accordingly, must not question the operation of natural law, whatever the effect upon himself. The wise man is he who accepts the fate nature has for him. Allied with the Stoical idea of resignation was that of self-sufficiency. The happy man is he who is self-sufficient, indifferent to pleasure and pain, impervious to the forces of the outside world.

Stoicism was too austere and intellectual to appeal to the Roman populace. Its influence, however, was extensive and profound. It was an important factor in alleviating many social evils. It humanized the Roman law in the third century A.D. and stressed the value and nobility of human beings no matter to what class they belonged. Stoicism presented a way

of life embracing service to humanity, constancy to duty, and courage under adversity.

**Applied science.** Roman thinkers apparently had little use for abstract scientific investigation. There was no Roman astronomer on a par with Ptolemy, no inventor in the same class with Archimedes, no medical scholar like Hippocrates, and no scientific thinker equal to Democritus. The Romans had little scientific curiosity to impel them to collect facts and formulate hypotheses. As in philosophy and art, the Romans borrowed Hellenistic science and applied it to meet the problems of everyday life. Science was used to make life more comfortable and secure. In science the Romans excelled primarily in applied medicine, public health, engineering, and mapmaking.

The Romans instituted the first real hospitals and medical schools. They also organized one of the first systems of socialized medicine. In the early empire a public medical service was started, with a large army of public doctors. Infirmaries were also established where the poor could obtain free medical care. Additional examples of the Roman concern for public health were the great aqueducts that supplied 300,000,000 gallons of water to Rome daily, the well-ventilated houses in Roman cities, admirable drainage systems, and the development of hydrotherapy, that is, the extensive use of mineral baths for healing.

**Medical scholarship.** The physician Galen (130?-200?) was a Roman only by adoption, having been born in Pergamum in Asia Minor. The fame of Galen's medical knowledge led the emperor to call him to Rome, where later the imported physician became the doctor of Marcus Aurelius. Galen wrote voluminously on medical problems. No one was his equal in medicine for more than a thousand years.

The only important native-born Roman medical scholar was Aurelius Cornelius Celsus, who lived in the first century A.D. His writings on medical science rank close to those of Hippocrates and Galen in the ancient period. Celsus' most important monograph was *De Re Medica*, in which may be found descriptions of plastic surgery, the removal of cataracts, and tonsil operations. This work was lost early in the Middle Ages but was recovered during the Renaissance.

**Encyclopedists.** One of the most characteristic and significant Roman scientific activities was the collection of scientific facts to form

immense encyclopedias. The most important of the encyclopedists was Pliny the Elder, who lived during the first century A.D. Though a busy government official, Pliny was an enthusiastic collector of all kinds of scientific odds and ends. In writing his great encyclopedia, Pliny is reputed to have read more than two thousand books. This work is a marvelous mixture of truth and fable. The author, enthusiastically following his hobby, gave little concern to the credibility of his finds. In the encyclopedia one may read descriptions of men whose feet point the wrong way, Indians with heads shaped like dogs, tribes with heads directly on their shoulders, and one man whose sight was so keen as to enable him to make out objects more than one hundred miles away.

Despite the mass of nonsense in Pliny's thirty-seven books, his encyclopedia was the most widely read book on science during the days of the Roman empire and much of the Middle Ages. It is the most remarkable collection of factual material regarding science, art, geography, and a host of other subjects produced in ancient times of which we have any knowledge.

**Other scientific writers.** Strabo (about 63 B.C.-21 A.D.), a Greek, is another significant figure in Roman science whose geographical writing is the most important that has come down to us from ancient times. Although

much of his material was gleaned from his personal travels, he was greatly indebted to the Greek geographer Eratosthenes. Another outstanding character was Vitruvius, whose *De Architectura* was a study of building. His work was the only one on the art of building available during the Middle Ages, and it also exercised an important influence during the Renaissance.

Marcus Terentius Varro wrote encyclopedically on all the sciences. One of his most significant works deals with agricultural methods. This Roman thinker organized human knowledge into nine branches—grammar, rhetoric, dialectic, arithmetic, music, geometry, astronomy, medicine, and architecture. His classification, minus the last two subjects, became the basis for the liberal-arts studies in medieval schools.

Julius Caesar, soldier and historian, was also a scientist. He introduced a very important reform in the Roman calendar, which by 47 B.C. was eighty-five days in error. The new Julian calendar provided for a year of 365 days, with an extra day in February every four years. This calendar, slightly modified in the year 1582, is still in use today. Julius Caesar also began a survey of the whole empire, which finally culminated in the drawing of a map so large that it required a special building to house it.

## Summary

The story of how Rome rose from the insignificant status of a muddy village along the banks of the river Tiber to the mighty position of master of the Mediterranean world will always remain one of the most fascinating epics in world history. Emerging from obscurity about the middle of the eighth century before Christ, the Latin people, clustered about Rome and its seven hills, succeeded in 509 B.C. in ousting their Etruscan overlords from power and establishing a republic. The next four hundred years of Roman history concerned two dominant themes: the democratization of the government and the conquest of the Mediterranean.

Following the expulsion of the Etruscan kings the aristocratic senate took charge of the state. Only the nobles exercised political rights, and the people, the plebeians, had no voice in the affairs of government. During the next two centuries, however, by obtaining the appointment of officers called tribunes to champion their rights, by having the laws codified and put in written form, and by the passing of the Hortensian Law in 287 B.C., the plebeians established a relatively democratic government. But the gains of the plebeians proved illusory. The people never exercised their theoretical powers, and in the long wars against Carthage the senate regained practically all its powers.

The other theme in the early history of Rome was the conquest of the Mediterranean. Between the years 509 and 270 B.C. the Romans managed to down all resistance in Italy. They then turned their attention to Carthage, Rome's only remaining rival in the western Mediterranean, and after a herculean struggle marked by the brilliant tactics but final defeat of Hannibal, Carthage was completely destroyed in 146 B.C. Having conquered the west, the Romans now became involved in disputes in the east, and in short order the petty and inefficient successors of Alexander the Great were defeated, and their territory came under the rule of the Roman republic. But when the western world was conquered, it soon became evident that Rome herself faced civil war and degeneration. The wars of conquest had resulted in the disappearance of the sturdy Roman farmers, the cities were filled with parasites and loungers who demanded free bread, and the government was corrupt.

Several patriotic reformers, such as the Gracchi brothers, tried to get the senate to enact necessary reforms, but to no avail. After the Gracchi a series of military heroes came to the fore in Roman history. Marius, Sulla, Pompey, and Julius Caesar mark the appearance of one-man rule and the end of the republic. In 49 B.C. Caesar crossed the Rubicon, marched on Rome, seized power, and for five years was the real master of Rome. His assassination in 44 B.C. did not restore the republic, which was utterly unable to solve the many problems the acquisition of a huge empire had created.

After defeating his uncle's enemies, Augustus, the heir of Caesar, ruled Rome wisely and well from 27 B.C. to 14 A.D. On the surface the old republican characteristics of government, such as the senate, were preserved, but Augustus wielded the real power in the new government, which was henceforth called the principate. For two hundred years the people of Italy and the many other millions of subjects in the empire's provinces enjoyed peace and prosperity.

Under the Antonine emperors, from 96 to 180 A.D., Rome reached the acme of power and happiness. In the reign of Marcus Aurelius, the last of the Antonine line, relentless attacks by the Germanic hordes commenced from without, and economic and social weaknesses became more and more serious within. By the fifth century, as we shall see in more detail in the next chapter, the empire was declining rapidly.

During the best days of its efficiency and strength the Roman empire brought peace, economic prosperity, and tolerant government to seventy-five million people. The multitudinous wars that had been carried on by the antagonistic political units in the Mediterranean area now gave way to the unity of Roman imperial rule. At no other time in history has the process of culture diffusion been more active than during the Roman empire.

An important contribution of the Romans was their work in government. In political theory they stressed the equality of man and gave us the germs of the social-contract theory and the idea of separation of governmental powers.

As builders the Romans have few equals in history. For the first time in the western world secular architecture on a monumental scale evolved. The government building, bath, colosseum, and triumphal arch superseded the temple, which had been the basic

architectural form of the Greeks. In other arts the Romans contributed realistic portrait sculpture, historical reliefs, stone and stucco decoration, and realistic fresco painting.

As writers, the Romans could not compare with the Greeks. Their only original literary works included comedy, the writing of history, and, perhaps best of all, satire. Virgil was the most important figure in Latin literature. Plautus and Terence made significant contributions in comedy, Livy and Tacitus were first-rate historians, and Martial and Juvenal were masters of satire. Cicero was a most important intellectual influence; he perfected Latin prose, popularized Greek philosophy, and wrote many essays and philosophical treatises.

The Romans accomplished little in the way of abstract thought and pure science, because they had slight interest in scientific speculation or experimentation. Borrowing Hellenistic science wholesale, they applied it to meet their practical needs. They were the first people to have hospitals, public medical service, efficient sewage systems, and a workable calendar. In philosophy the Romans got their thought ready-made from Greece. Epicureanism and Stoicism appealed most to the Romans, and in their hands the latter was given a new force and dignity.

## ROME FALLS; RISE OF THE CHURCH: 200-900

<b>The Dominate</b>		
193-235	Septimius Severus begins trend	Army is real power in empire
235-284	Period of civil wars, invasion	Central authority collapses
284-337	Reorganization: Diocletian, Constantine (In east, Constantinople founded)	Economic decline: land monopoly Economic absolutism: price-fixing, growth of colonate
	Ruin of the middle class	Solace sought in Stoicism, Neo-Platonism, Christianity
1-33	Life of Christ	
35	Paul converted; active missionary	
249-303	Violent persecution of Christians	
300	Christianity dominant in whole empire	
313	Christianity legalized: Edict of Milan	Church organization and dogma crystallize, 4th century
325	Council of Nicaea: Nicene Creed	
<b>Fall of Rome</b>		
337-395	Joint rulers: east and west	Rome vs. Constantinople in religion
375-500	Great German invasions	Fusion of German and Roman cultures
378	Battle of Adrianople	Great Church fathers, 4th and 5th centuries
395	Permanent division of empire	Christianity becomes sole religion
410	Breakdown of Roman frontiers begins	
5th century	Visigothic kingdom in Spain, Anglo-Saxons in England, Theodoric's Ostrogothic kingdom in Italy	
476	Fall of Rome	
<b>Ordeal of the West</b>		
486-c.500	Clovis founds Frankish empire	Cassiodorus, Boethius, scholars
6th century	General confusion and chaos	Church: preserver of culture Missionaries: Columban, Boniface Monasteries: Benedictine order founded Gregory of Tours, Venerable Bede
751	Pepin establishes Carolingian dynasty of Franks	
768-814	Charlemagne rules the Franks	
800	Coronation of Charlemagne as emperor, by Pope	Restoration of strong government The Palace School
9th century	Dissolution of Frankish empire Return of chaos: Invasion of the Northmen	

## CHAPTER 7

### *Interval in the West*



**A**LTHOUGH the Roman empire continued its existence into the fifth century, its days were numbered because of the incursion of barbarian hordes. The barbarians, called Germans by the Romans, were not merely the ancient inhabitants of modern Germany. The Germans known by the Romans included people living in an area reaching from the Black Sea to the mouth of the Rhine and from the Scandinavian peninsula to the boundaries of the Roman empire along the Danube. Both the barbarians and the Church exercised a tremendous influence upon the course of European history.

In a sense the Roman empire had been undergoing "barbarization" for a long time before its fall. German soldiers were encouraged to enlist with the legions, Germans were settled on vacant lands, and many blue-eyed tribesmen from north of the Danube went south into the Roman provinces to seek their fortune. If this peaceful contact had been permitted to continue, in all probability a huge number of Germans would have been assimilated in the empire. The devastating invasions of the fifth century ended peaceful infiltration, and the Roman political structure collapsed. In the ensuing confusion, however, a powerful agency moved into the gap left by the Caesars. The place of the Roman emperors was taken by the Popes. The Christian Church played the dominant role in the five hundred years following the waning of the classical world.

Although we speak of the fall of Rome or the end of the Roman empire, the phrase is not strictly accurate, for only the western half of the empire with its capital at Rome was inundated by Germanic invaders. In the east, Constantinople perpetuated the glory of the Caesars, and for one thousand years her civilization was superior to that of western Europe. Her Byzantine culture will be described at length in Chapter 8.



People often refer to the period of the Germanic invasions as the Dark Ages. But it was a significant period, during which the civilization of the classical world, mainly Greek and Roman, which in turn had been based on the civilization of the Near East, was blended with Germanic institutions to produce our modern world. In the process of blending the various elements into a new historical compound, the catalytic agent, as chemists would say, was the Christian Church. It preserved knowledge until men in the western world were ready again to appreciate it, took over some of the neglected functions of government, restrained the bellicose Germanic tribes, and protected the weak and helpless. It is a fascinating story—how elements from the ancient Near East, Greece, Rome, and the Germanic tribes were fashioned into a new product which, as we shall see, began about 1100 to produce outstanding literary, intellectual, and artistic achievements for the enrichment of world civilization.

### *The Last Phase of the Roman Empire*

**A** century of civil war. The death of the emperor Marcus Aurelius brought to an end two centuries of imperial prosperity. His son, Commodus, who succeeded him in 180 A.D., proved to be a cruel tyrant who emptied the imperial treasury by his voluptuous living and shocked the Romans with his dissipations and cruelties. After he had reigned twelve years, a group of conspirators bribed Commodus' athletic trainer to strangle his royal master. The death of the tyrant ushered in a century of civil war which was terminated in 284 only by the accession of the strong and efficient Diocletian to the imperial throne.

Following the murder of Commodus civil war broke out among the military leaders, who fought among themselves for the privilege of naming the next emperor. After much bloodshed Septimius Severus became emperor in 193. His accession marks the end of the principate. From now on the emperor made no attempt to hide the fact that he was "army-made" and would not tolerate the senate's interference with his plans. Septimius Severus was the first real absolute ruler. He called himself *dominus* (lord); thus the principate was replaced by absolute rule known as the *dominate*. The new emperor was a good soldier and defeated some of the barbarian invaders who had managed to cross the Roman frontier.

The army now became the real power in the empire, and many of the high government offices were filled with uncouth soldiers to whom the emperor was indebted for his support. On his deathbed, Septimius Severus is reputed to

have told his sons, "Make the soldiers rich and don't trouble about the rest." This toadying to the soldiery was to have dire effects on the empire.

The line of Septimius Severus held the imperial office until 235. After its extinction a period of virtual anarchy ensued. In the next fifty years there were twenty-two emperors, twenty of whom were murdered. The latter part of the third century was a terrible period for the Roman empire, for it was lashed from without by foreign invaders and rent from within by bloody civil wars revolving around disputed elections of the emperors.

**Imperial decline explained.** The most obvious factor in the rapid decline of the empire was the virtual collapse of the authority of the central government. No effective system of constitutional succession to the imperial throne had been worked out, and no one was ever certain who was to be the next emperor. This gave the army its opportunity. The imperial scepter was dragged in the gutter by the generals of the various armies who murdered emperors with no compunction, intimidated the senate, placed their puppets on the imperial throne, and then unhesitatingly murdered them on the slightest excuse, to make way for other puppets. "The empire," declares M. I. Rostovtzeff, "became the chattel of the soldiers."<sup>1</sup> Often the legions marched through the countryside, pillaging as they went. Irresponsible soldiery destroyed vast amounts of wealth.

Another factor explaining the decline of Rome in the third century was the attack of



*The Saalburg is a reconstructed Roman castellum which was part of the Limes fortifications, built against the barbarians. Notice the arched gateways and the ditch along the wall.*

foes from without. Lack of discipline in the army and its neglect of duty gave the enemies of Rome their opportunity. Numerous barbarian tribes, especially Goths, attacked the frontier. All of the territory held by Rome north of the Danube and east of the Rhine was lost. In the east a new menace appeared, a re-invigorated Persia under the rule of the brilliant Sassanid dynasty (226-641 A.D.), under whom the Persians conquered the Fertile Crescent. In the face of the inability of the central government to cope with these attacks, the people on the frontier began to establish independent states and take measures for their own defense. One senator ruled not only Gaul but also Britain and north Spain, independently of Rome. The loss of territory was a serious matter for a time, but the unity of the empire

was again restored by the heroic efforts of two third-century emperors, who pushed back the barbarian tribes on the north and reconquered Asia Minor and Gaul.

**Economic decline.** Less obvious than governmental chaos and foreign invasions, but more deadly in the long run to the well-being of the empire, was economic decline. The trend toward the concentration of land ownership in a few hands, which we noted at the time of the Gracchi, had gone on in spite of all efforts at control. In Nero's reign, for example, the whole province of Africa consisted of a half-dozen estates owned by six wealthy landlords. By the third century land monopoly was so widespread that nearly all land in the empire was controlled by a small aristocratic clique.

The small farmers could not compete with the large farms, or *latifundia*, and were consequently forced to give up their little parcels of land. The small farmer became a *colonus*, that is, he obtained a plot of land from a large landholder. By arrangement with the landholder the farmer was free to cultivate his small patch of land, but in return he had to agree to render many manual services in the fields of his landlord. As time went on, the *colonus* became nothing more than a semi-slave, technically a freeman but bound to the soil, passing with the land if it changed owners. It was the first step toward serfdom, a form of livelihood which was to play such an important role during the Middle Ages. Many sturdy farmers forced off their land refused to become *coloni* and fled to the cities where they often became an unemployed rabble living off the dole.

To make matters worse, confusion reigned in the monetary system. The currency was debased by reducing the content of precious metal in the Roman coins, which of course made them less valuable. It therefore took more coins than before to buy the same quantity of goods, or, to put it another way, the prices of commodities tended to rise out of all reason.

Civil war decreased purchasing power and disturbed trade, which had never rested on a satisfactory basis. Rome had never developed a sufficiently vigorous export trade, and too much of her glittering prosperity in the days of her glory was made possible by the tribute exacted from the provinces. Fundamentally, too much of Roman commercial activity was unproductive. The French historian Victor Duruy admirably sums up the matter when he declares, "Rome, which made the provinces send her everything, never reimbursed them except with the money from the taxes, that is to say, with the very sums with which these provinces had provided her. Her so-called commerce was thus only indirect robbery. The capital, being an unproductive city, was truly an 'octopus.'"<sup>2</sup>

Economists also point out that the Roman empire never developed large-scale industry. Each locality tended to be self-sufficient. The decline in commerce spelled ruin for the cities, which were dependent upon trade for their very existence. The empire, we recall, was basically a collection of numerous city-states

which were to the empire what cells are to the human body. When they lost their vigor, the great imperial structure became afflicted by an incurable disease.

*The empire in the east.* During the third century, when evidences of serious decline began to manifest themselves in the Roman state, it began to appear that the western half of the empire, especially Italy, was going downhill much faster than the provinces in the eastern part of the empire. Commerce and trade in the Balkan peninsula more than held their own, while the rapid expansion of the *latifundia* system in Italy was degrading the populace and filling Rome with unemployed farmers. From that time on, emperors turned their attention more and more to the east, until one of them, as we shall see shortly, actually created a new imperial capital, coequal with Rome, in the eastern part of the empire.

*Diocletian.* The Roman world was given a much needed respite from decline when Diocletian became emperor in 284. With his accession civil war ended. The new ruler was a strong and capable administrator who immediately set about trying by drastic measures to restore the efficiency of the government, defend the frontiers, and stop the steady economic decline. Although they arrested the decline, in the long run his efforts only strengthened the factors causing the downfall of the empire.

The first task was to strengthen the government. Diocletian completed the trend toward despotism initiated by Septimius Severus. The Roman senate was relegated to the status of a mere city council. The emperor adorned himself with robes sparkling with jewels and was addressed as "the most sacred lord." Furthermore, he assumed the title of Sun God, surrounding himself with all the glitter of an oriental despot, in frank imitation of oriental ways. An imperial etiquette, similar to that introduced in the French court by the monarch Louis XIV in the seventeenth century, was established, which made of the emperor a veritable god.

The administrative units of the empire were reorganized. Over one hundred provinces under governors were grouped into twelve dioceses, each under a vicar, and these dozen units in turn were further divided into four prefectures under prefects. In the new governmental system of Diocletian there was little room for local government. We remember that

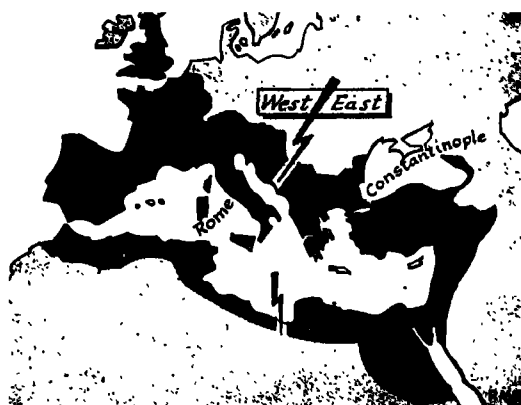
the menace of the Persian autocratic way of life had been successfully repelled by the Greeks in the fifth century B.C. But the once sturdy individualism of Greece and Rome had now at last been conquered by a rigid despotism.

The new administrative reforms necessitated a huge civil service. Then, in order to detect graft in the ranks of the government servants, a large secret service was created. But the evil of corruption apparently was so deeply rooted that the spies seemed to make little improvement. As someone said, "Who is to watch the watchers?"

Diocletian also introduced what he hoped would be a better method of succession to the throne. He chose an assistant named Maximian and made him co-emperor in the west, while he controlled the eastern half of the empire. These two Augusti then each chose another assistant, called a Caesar. There were now four rulers responsible for the government of the empire. The idea was to found a new dynasty, so that there would be no question but that the Caesars would take over the reins of government when the Augusti retired from office.

**Constantine.** Following the retirement of Diocletian in 305 his grandiose system collapsed. Civil war broke out. Diocletian's system of imperial succession did not work in practice, and in 310 there were five rival emperors, or Augusti, but no Caesars. In a few years one of the contestants for the throne forged to the front. He was Constantine, who had himself been converted to the new religious sect called Christianity. After a victory over one of his rivals, Constantine issued an edict of toleration for Christianity in 313. This was, as we shall see, one of the most momentous acts of the new emperor. After sharing his rule for a few years with another emperor, Constantine became sole ruler in 324.

**The division of the empire.** It was now becoming more and more apparent that the eastern part of the empire was much stronger and in less danger of collapsing than the western part. Constantine accordingly built a new capital on the site of the Greek town of Byzantium, an excellent strategic location. It was surrounded on three sides by water and could be reached only through a long narrow channel that could be made practically impregnable. Byzantium also possessed a splen-



did harbor. Constantine named his eastern capital New Rome, but it soon became known as Constantinople. The erection of the eastern capital put the seal on the division of the empire into two halves, the east and the west. For about half a century following the death of Constantine in 337, the unity of the empire was preserved by the rule of two joint emperors, one in the east and the other in the west. But after the emperorship of Theodosius the empire was permanently divided (395), governed as two separate units and never again united.

**Economic absolutism.** Both Diocletian and Constantine made strenuous attempts to arrest economic decay in the empire. They tried to control economic life with the same absolute authority they had introduced in government. The fluctuation of the price level caused Diocletian in 301 to issue an edict which set the maximum price for goods. The law was impractical and unenforceable. The net result was injustice and even more misery for certain classes.

Social regimentation, a veritable caste system, was also introduced to serve the economic interests of the state. In 332 Constantine decreed that henceforth no *colonus* could leave the soil and that his children had to accept the same status as that of their father. His economic absolutism went further. Everyone was "chained to his post." In the cities the same caste system was applied to members of the corporations, or guilds (*collegia*). All guilds whose activities were essential to the state, such as supplying grain, baking, transportation, and entertaining the city mobs, were made hereditary organizations, a member of which was bound to his occupation and even

had to marry the daughter of a member of his guild. A son, of course, had to follow in his father's footsteps. This was social regimentation with a vengeance.

The same hereditary principle was applied to the city's middle class, from whose ranks came the *decuriones*, who were members of the municipal *curia*, or council. The *decuriones* were made responsible for the collection of the taxes and had to make good any deficit in the revenue. Many of the *decuriones* tried desperately to evade the crushing burden. Some joined the army, others the Church, and some even became *coloni*.

The desperate measures instituted by Diocletian and Constantine were to no avail. In the long run the remedy was as bad as the disease from which the empire suffered. A famous historian has described conditions in the latter part of the fourth century thus: "The Roman Empire . . . was based on ignorance, on compulsion and violence, on slavery and servility, on bribery and dishonesty."<sup>3</sup> The principate had given way to the dominate, a vast bureaucracy had been created, and economic regimentation chained men to the soil and to their guilds. But there was no stopping the progressive sapping of the empire's strength.

**Popularity of new religions.** In the face of these conditions, a disillusioned people sought solace in new types of religion. The old Roman faith was too cold and formal to meet the needs of the unhappy population. Many of the educated classes turned to Stoicism for comfort and fortitude. Neo-Platonism also appealed to many intellectuals. It taught that

real happiness was to be realized only by the union of the soul with God through contemplation and ecstasy. The Neo-Platonists believed the only reality is spirit; the material world is unreal and non-existent. The soul can never be happy on earth. Its main objective, therefore, is to escape from the material world and get back to its spiritual home. With such a belief the Neo-Platonists had little interest in the problems of this world. The most noted teacher of Neo-Platonism was Plotinus (204-270), an Alexandrian.

Stoicism and Neo-Platonism had little appeal for the common people, who turned to many religions that had been imported from the east. Among the most popular of the oriental religions were the worship of the Egyptian Isis and Osiris, the Phrygian Cybele (Magna Mater), the Greek Dionysus, and the Persian Mithras, god of light, a cult which was especially popular among the soldiers. The Roman people were attracted to the oriental religions because they presented the comforting idea of a divine protector and the hope of everlasting life, and also because they appealed to the emotions. In brief, these religions gave a new sense of hope and power to their devotees. The people were also attracted by the pomp, the mysterious rites, and the intoxicating songs, which helped them forget the worries of this world. In most of the oriental religions there was the promise of remission of sins, and purification rites invited the worried sinner to repent and begin life anew.

The greatest of the religions coming from the Near East has not yet been mentioned. It was Christianity.

### *The Rise of Christianity*

**The life of Jesus.** Christianity was founded by Jesus Christ. He was born in Bethlehem of very lowly parents, Joseph and Mary, who lived in Nazareth. Here Jesus spent the first thirty years of His life in the obscure village in Galilee, following the trade of a carpenter. Although He had little formal education, Jesus studied the sacred writings of his people and, while only a boy, astonished the learned men in the temple at Jerusalem by His grasp of the Scriptures and His profound wisdom.

The Jews at this time were finding Roman rule intolerable and longed for the advent of a great national leader, the Messiah, who

would drive the Roman masters from their land and reestablish an independent and prosperous Jewish state.

About 28 A.D. Jesus emerged from obscurity and began to preach the coming of a new order in which suffering and injustice would be no more. Mingling among the poor and lowly classes of society, Jesus carried on His mission, using graphic and simple words and explaining His doctrines by homely parables based upon the everyday experiences of His listeners. Jesus preached a gospel based upon love of one's fellow man. He stressed humility and urged service and helpfulness

## THE RISE OF CHRISTIANITY

to one's neighbors rather than the selfish pursuit of wealth and power. Violence was to be shunned, for evil could always be overcome with good. The selfishness of the rich and the self-righteousness of the Jewish priests He denounced with burning eloquence.

During His ministry, which lasted perhaps three years, Jesus obtained many friends and followers among the poorer classes. The fame of His teachings, His holiness, and His miracles spread throughout the land. When He came to Jerusalem to attend the Feast of the Passover, He was welcomed triumphantly by huge crowds who regarded Him as the promised Messiah who would lead the Jews to a glorious victory against their oppressive Roman masters.

But Jesus apparently had no interest in creating an earthly kingdom. He was no conquering hero. The kingdom about which He spoke so eloquently to His followers was a spiritual one based on peace and righteousness enshrined in the hearts of men. When the people realized that Jesus had no intention of leading a nationalistic movement against the Romans, they turned against the young leader. As His followers melted away, other antagonistic groups that had been waiting their opportunity joined in open opposition against Jesus. During His short ministry He had alienated the businessmen by His denunciation of wealth and His scourging of the money changers and merchants in the temple at Jerusalem. The Jewish priests resented the popularity of Jesus and feared that the movement He sponsored might deprive them of their privileged position. Many Jews regarded Jesus as a radical underminer of the foundations of society, a disturber of the status quo, and a blasphemer of Jehovah.

Betrayed by one of His followers, Jesus was condemned by the Jewish Sanhedrin, a religious court, and turned over to the civil authority of Rome for punishment. Pilate, the Roman official in charge of the proceedings, at first saw no fault in Jesus, but, afraid of losing his popularity with the Jewish upper classes, he consented to the crucifixion of the leader. Jesus died as a common criminal. It seemed as though His cause had been exterminated. Apparently nothing remained of His work; no written message had been left behind for His few loyal followers, who were now scattered and disheartened.

**Early Christianity.** The martyrdom of Jesus, however, soon had momentous consequences. Rumors soon spread that Jesus had been seen after His crucifixion, that He had spoken to His disciples and urged them to carry on His mission and thus make way for the second Coming of Christ. Quickly a little group of devoted followers concentrated at Jerusalem, where they reverently reminisced about the teachings of their Master and began quietly to try to convert other Jews to their cause.

At first there were few new converts, but about 45 A.D. the movement was expanded by the inauguration of missionary work among the numerous Jews who were scattered throughout the Mediterranean world. Whereas the Jews in their homeland were inclined to be narrow and intolerant in their religious views, Jews living in foreign lands, in contact with new ideas and modes of living, were less hidebound in their outlook, less firmly committed to traditionalism. Among Jewish communities in such great cities as Athens, Antioch, Corinth, and Rome, the new religion first made real headway.

**Paul.** As long as the followers of Jesus regarded Him exclusively as the Jewish Messiah who had no interest in the salvation of non-Jews, or gentiles, the growth of the new religion was seriously impeded. The obstacle was removed by St. Paul, the great missionary of early Christianity, who made it a universal religion. Paul was born in a flourishing city in Asia Minor. After following the trade of tentmaker for a time, Paul carried on advanced studies in the best schools of his country. Endowed with a keen mind, he soon became a fine Greek and Hebrew scholar well versed in the Jewish law, which he may have taught for a time at Jerusalem. While a contemporary of Jesus, he never met Him, but was aroused by His teachings, which he regarded as undermining Roman authority. Paul assisted in the persecution of the Christians until, about 35 A.D., he experienced a profound spiritual conversion, which revealed to him the error of his ways. Immediately afterward he became a zealous and loyal follower of Jesus.

**Paul's missionary work.** Paul quickly appreciated that Christianity could grow only very slowly in Palestine. He perceived that the most fertile soil for converts was in other areas of the Roman empire, where hundreds of

thousands of gentiles, dissatisfied with the state religion and with the many pagan cults, were seeking new truth that would give them hope and serenity in a world filled with injustice and economic misery. The Jews outside of their homeland, as we have already noted, were also more receptive to Christianity than those in Palestine steeped in the orthodox beliefs of Judaism.

Paul eliminated many of the narrow characteristics from Christianity and made it a universal religion. No longer was there to be a distinction between Jew and gentile. Paul shrewdly concentrated his missionary work in the great urban centers of the eastern Mediterranean. He preached the gospel at Salonika, Athens, Antioch, Corinth, and Rome. One of the techniques Paul used in strengthening and encouraging the many little Christian communities he had founded was the frequent dispatch of letters to his converts. Some of his letters now form the Epistles of the New Testament. Besides his missionary activity, Paul exercised great influence upon the development and shaping of Christian doctrine. Jesus was recognized as the Christ, the Son of God who had died to atone for the sins of mankind, and acceptance of this belief guaranteed life after death to all.

During his many missionary journeys Paul underwent privation, opposition, and even physical violence. Finally he went to Rome to stand trial for his religious views. Our knowledge concerning the last few years of his life is meager, but apparently, after spending several years in the Roman capital busily engaging in Christian evangelism, he was beheaded about 65 A.D., during the reign of Nero.

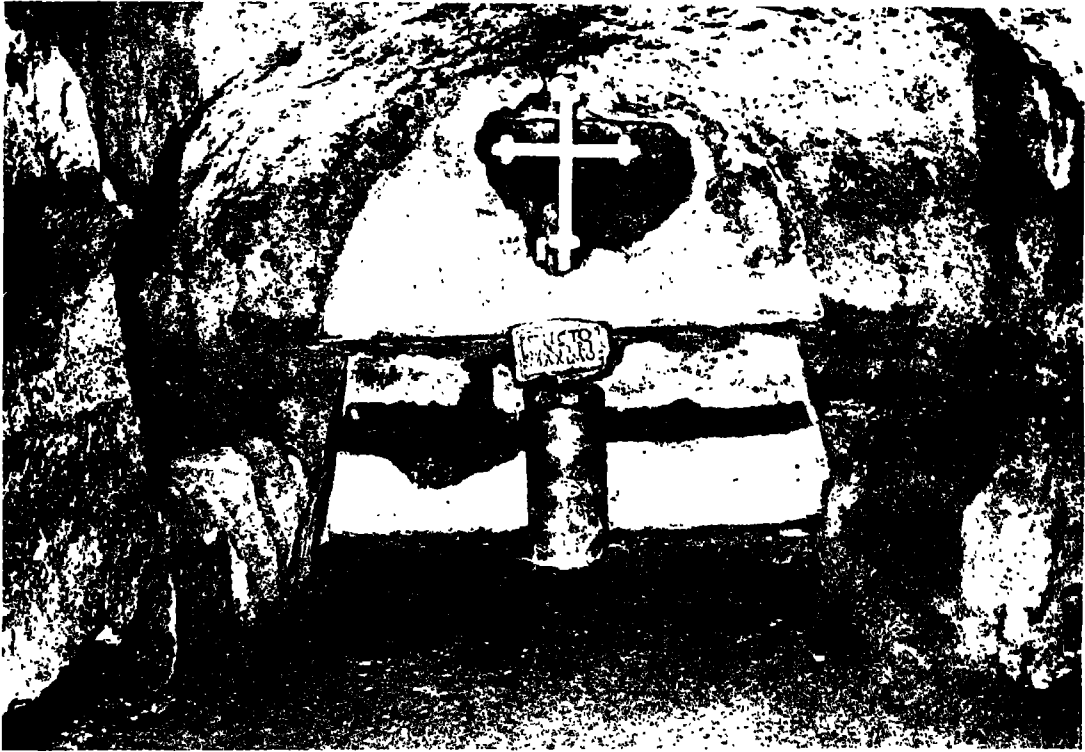
**The growth of Christianity.** After the death of Jesus, Christianity grew slowly, as we have seen, finding its adherents chiefly among the humble classes. The Jews were generally despised, and people were inclined to be contemptuous of what they considered the latest manifestation of the religious fanaticism of God's "chosen people." As a result of the missionary efforts of Paul and his followers, however, the new sect made phenomenal progress, and when the great evangelist died, there were Christian communities in all the important cities of the empire. By the reign of Marcus Aurelius (161-180), Christianity had become the dominant religion in the eastern part of the empire and was challenging the

most important pagan cult, Mithraism, for supremacy in the western provinces of the empire. By 300 it was well on its way to becoming the dominant religion throughout the Roman world.

**Reasons for the spread of Christianity.** What factors can the historian advance to explain this remarkable growth? As the empire declined, men strove to find solace in some religion that would turn their thoughts away from the turbulence and misery of their day. In Christianity they found the comradeship and solace which they sought. The doctrine of the equality of all men, the doctrine of a loving Father who had sent His only Son to atone for men's sins, the vision of blessed immortality, and the idea that regardless of how base man had been, it was possible to be "born again" and be cleansed of sin—these doctrines uniquely met the fundamental spiritual longing of the age. In a word, Christianity better than any other religion gave men a feeling of hope and spiritual assurance which helped compensate and offset the uncertainty and insecurity now plainly apparent in the world about them.

Christianity was a dynamic, aggressive religion. It created a church organization which was far more united and efficient than any possessed by its competitors. Other elements which influenced the growth of Christianity were the definiteness of its teachings, the enthusiasm and zeal of its converts, and the courage with which they faced death and persecution.

**The New Testament.** A unique Christian literature was developed—the New Testament. Not long after the death of Christ the need arose for a history of His life and an account of His teachings and sayings. Gradually a number of documents, written mainly by certain outstanding disciples of Christ, emerged. There were originally many writings other than those now contained in the twenty-seven books of our New Testament. This resulted in a great amount of discussion as to what writings should be included in the Christian canon, but the process of selection was finally achieved by the seventh century. None of the original copies of the books of the New Testament has come down to us. Written on papyrus, they were very perishable. The oldest known manuscripts of the New Testament date from the fourth century.



*In the dim, eerie passageways of the catacombs the Christians held their first timid meetings. The martyr Maximus is buried in this chapel in the catacombs of St. Sebastian, Rome.*

**Government persecution of Christians.** Practically everyone has heard about the terrible persecutions of the Christians at the hands of Roman officials. The Roman government tolerated any religion which did not threaten the safety or tranquillity of the state or interfere with the worship of the emperor. Roman officials had no quarrel with a person's religious preference as long as he was willing to take part in the ceremonies of state cults. The worship of the emperor was a patriotic rite uniting all Roman subjects in common loyalty to the Roman government. The Christians, however, would have nothing to do with the state religious ceremonies. To them there was only one God; no other could share their loyalty to Him. In the eyes of the Roman officials this attitude branded the Christians as unpatriotic.

In addition, the Christians would not engage in military service and refused to accept political office. They also were criticized because of their fierce intolerance of other religious sects, which often led to religious riots. They would not associate with their pagan

relatives and refused to participate in social functions, which they thought sinful or degrading.

In the face of these facts the emperors inaugurated persecution against the Christians, not because of intolerance of belief but because they seemed to threaten the very existence of the state. Marcus Aurelius was one of the most determined foes of the new religion. In the third century a series of severe persecutions was carried out. The first widespread campaign against the Christians was carried out by the emperor Decius in 249, and the last by Diocletian in 303.

**Official recognition and acceptance.** It soon became apparent that there was to be no stamping out of the new religion by force. In fact, the Christians seemed to welcome martyrdom, and the "blood of the martyrs became the seed of the church." In 311 the emperor Galerius issued an edict of toleration, and two years later, by the Edict of Milan, Constantine raised Christianity to the status of a legalized religion, on a par with all pagan cults. In his struggle for the imperial



crown, Constantine had had to engage in a desperate battle with his rival Maxentius. At the height of the conflict, tradition has it that Constantine saw emblazoned across the sky a cross with the words "*In Hoc Vince*" ("By this sign conquer"). The edict of legalization followed his victory, and henceforth Constantine favored Christianity.

Constantine's successors, with the notable exception of Julian, carried out a pro-Christian policy. During the reigns of the emperors Gratian and Theodosius in the latter part of the fourth century the government ceased to support the pagan temples and transferred state support to the Christian Church. In 395 the emperor Theodosius made Christianity the sole and official religion of the state. In little more than three hundred years, Christianity, in spite of all obstacles, had become the official religion of a world empire. The first decades of the fifth century saw the destruction of pagan altars, and by the middle of the century the pagan cults were being extirpated by force.

**Early church organization.** For a half century after the death of Christ there was little organization in the Christian movement. The earliest converts saw no necessity for organization, for they regarded their present world as only a temporary thing which would speedily end with the Second Coming of their Lord. But Christ did not appear, and the Christians gradually had to adjust themselves to the practical fact that since hundreds of years might elapse before the Second Coming it was essential to develop a definite church organization.

**Development of church offices.** At first there was little or no distinction between laity and clergy. Soon a number of famous teachers appeared, who traveled about visiting far-flung Christian communities, to which they then preached and gave advice when it was needed. This system soon proved quite inadequate. The tremendous increase in the ranks of the Christians demanded that special church officials be created who would devote all their time to church work, who could keep abreast of the rapidly developing Christian dogma, take care of the funds, and conduct the church services and rituals efficiently. At first the officials were called elders, or presbyters; they were also referred to as bishops, or overseers. By the second century the offices of bishop and presbyter had become distinct. The bishop now

had the right to enforce obedience from his presbyters and from other subordinates such as stewards and recorders. New churches organized in the country adjacent to the mother church, which was usually located in a city, were administered by presbyters responsible to the bishop. Thus an administrative division evolved, called a diocese, under the jurisdiction of a bishop.

The office of bishop was the most important in the Church. The bishop had charge of all church property in his diocese, and was the official interpreter of Christian dogma. The bishop of the most important city in each province (made up of a number of dioceses) enjoyed more prestige than his fellows and became known as the archbishop or metropolitan. The provinces were grouped into another administrative division called a patriarchate. The title of patriarch was applied to the bishop of such great cities as Rome and Alexandria. In a city like Constantinople, for example, a man could be a bishop, archbishop, and patriarch at the same time.

In the evolution of an organized hierarchy the Church was indebted to Roman governmental models. In building their organization the Christian officials took over the administrative divisions of the Roman empire and borrowed much of its law. The title of bishop, for example, came from an important office of the Roman municipality.

**The papacy.** A development of outstanding importance in the organization of the Christian Church was the rise of the bishop of Rome to a position of preëminence in the hierarchy of the Church. At first Rome was only one of several patriarchates, no more important than Alexandria, Jerusalem, Antioch, or Constantinople. But gradually the bishop at Rome was recognized as the leader of the Church and assumed the title of Pope.

There were many factors explaining the development of the papacy at Rome. Rome was the capital of the political world. It had a proud tradition. Why should it not be regarded as the spiritual capital of Christianity? Rome was also the largest city in the west, and its church the most important. It was the center of a strong missionary movement, and the Christian churches which it founded naturally turned to the mother church and its bishop for help and guidance. The Church at Rome was not rent by disputes concerning doctrine,

which weakened and divided the Christians in the east. Its reputation for purity of doctrine often caused other churches engaged in theological disputes to bring their problems to the bishop at Rome for settlement, a practice which redounded to the prestige of Rome.

Perhaps the most important factor in the rise of the papacy was the Petrine doctrine. The doctrine taught that the Roman Church had been founded by Peter, the leader of Christ's disciples. It stated that the Savior had appointed Peter as His successor, that Peter went to Rome and established a church. He thus became the foremost bishop, and before his death he passed on his leadership to another bishop at Rome.

The fact that Rome had been the center of Christian persecution sanctified its Church with the aura of martyrdom. The weakening of political power in the west and the transfer of the capital from Rome, causing the bishop at Constantinople to be overshadowed by strong emperors, also helps explain the great powers which came to be associated with the Popes at Rome. Finally, the higher offices of the Church in the west were in the main filled by a remarkable series of outstanding administrators and constructive theologians, whose efforts tended to strengthen the power and authority of the bishop of Rome. By the year 600 the bishop at Rome had become the spiritual emperor of the western world. His supremacy in that area was undisputed.

**The eastern Church.** In the eastern part of the old empire, however, the Pope's claim to supremacy was disputed by the patriarch at Constantinople. In the latter part of the fourth century a bitter dispute arose between church leaders in Rome and in Constantinople. This controversy was carried on with little interruption until 1054, when the two branches of the Christian Church definitely split. The Christian Church in the west—now known as the Catholic Church—acknowledged the primacy of the Pope; the Greek Orthodox Church in the east admitted loyalty to no other official than the patriarch at Constantinople. Thus the Christian Church was sundered into two rival divisions, undoubtedly reducing its effectiveness and decreasing the possibility of cooperation between western and eastern Europe in the event of an emergency.

**Growth of Christian doctrine.** We have just seen how the early Christian communities,

possessing little organization to start with, became slowly welded into a unified system with a numerous army of graded officials culminating in the all-powerful Pope. The clergy was now a distinct class set apart from the laymen, acting as an indispensable intermediary between God and man. While the administrative structure was being erected, the beliefs of the Church were being unified and organized.

Jesus in His day gave little heed to the development of an intellectualized creed for His followers. His religion was eminently simple. It was a way of life based on humility, love, and service to others. There were many converts, however, who brought to Christianity a training in, and a love for, Greek thought. Paul was one such convert. The converted Greek scholars wanted the teachings of Christ explained and systematized.

This process began with Paul, who stressed the divinity of Christ and interpreted His death as a miraculous atonement for man's sins. As the doctrine of the Trinity was gradually formulated, Christ was regarded as one of three persons in what was called the Godhead, consisting of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost. The creed of Christianity thus became more complex and subtle, and, in keeping with the trend toward closer unity in church organization, there was a tendency to develop one authoritative creed which all Christians had to accept.

While the process of creed-making was going on and dogma was in a fluid state, there were many differences of opinion over doctrinal matters. It will be impossible to discuss the many schools of thought (heresies) which differed from that of the Popes at Rome. One of the most important heresies was Arianism. The basic question at issue in the Arian controversy was the relative position of the three members of the Trinity. As expounded by Arius (256-336), a presbyter of Alexandria, Christ was not of a substance identical with God and was not coeternal with Him. So serious became the controversy between Arius and the followers of Athanasius, who espoused the more common view of the equality of God and the Son, that the emperor Constantine convened the famous Council of Nicaea in 325. Here the view of Athanasius was upheld. Christ was declared to be consubstantial with God the Father and coeternal. The beliefs upheld at the Council of Nicaea were formu-

lated into the Nicene Creed. Some churches use this creed today, substantially unchanged although more than sixteen hundred years old.

**The Church Fathers.** Both the development of the Church's administrative hierarchy, which led to the formation of the papacy, and the creation of a body of authoritative dogma owed much to the great Church Fathers, who lived mainly in the fourth and fifth centuries. They were influential in shaping theology, which dealt in the main with the nature of Christ, the role the Church should play in this world, and what man had to do to obtain salvation. In the east the Greek Church owed much to the ability of such Fathers as Origen (185-254), who was a stern foe of heresy; Athanasius, whose views were accepted at the Council of Nicaea; and St. Basil (329?-379), who also combated various heresies. In the west the three greatest Church Fathers were St. Ambrose (340?-397), bishop of Milan; St. Jerome (340?-420), one of the greatest scholars of his day, most famous for his Latin translation of the Bible, called the Vulgate, which is still the official translation of the Catholic Church; and St. Augustine (354-430),

the most important of all the Fathers. St. Augustine's book *The City of God* had tremendous influence upon the thought of the Middle Ages, and the views expounded in it became the foundation of much of the Church's theology.

**Ritual.** The service of worship in the early churches was plain and simple, consisting of prayer, the reading of the Scriptures, hymns, and preaching. Gradually, however, the service was transformed into beautiful and significant ceremonial. The simple commemoration of the Last Supper became a liturgical rite suffused with spiritual symbolism and central in the life of the Church: the Mass. Baptism became an important sacrament of purification. Other elements added to the ritual were the veneration of the saints, penance, and confession.

In the early period of Christianity the believer worshiped God and sought salvation largely through his own efforts. Following the growth of church organization and the crystallization of its dogma, the Church now constituted the indispensable intermediary between God and man. Without the Church the individual could not hope to approach God.

### *The "Fall of Rome"*

**Reasons for the collapse of the empire.** It has been pointed out that beginning with the reign of the emperor Marcus Aurelius (161-180 A.D.) the empire began to decline rapidly in strength and prosperity. Some of the factors mentioned to explain this process were (1) an unsatisfactory system of imperial succession that made the emperorship the football of irresponsible army leaders, (2) the collapse of commerce, (3) the disappearance of the small-farmer class, and (4) the creation of a system of imperial despotism designed by such rulers as Diocletian to retard Rome's decline, which in the long run only served to accelerate the process of disintegration.

In her long history Rome had shown that it was possible for her to solve serious weaknesses. Faced with civil war in the first century B.C., she averted a catastrophe by substituting the principate for the republic. Again the century of revolution which followed the rule of the Antonine emperors was ended by the oriental despotism of Diocletian. It appeared for a time that Diocletian and Constantine

would be able to reestablish strong government and economic prosperity and that Rome would again be able to ride out the storm that threatened to destroy her. But it was not to be. Left to her own devices, perhaps imperial Rome could have attained a new period of tranquillity and power, but a new menace arose which shattered all attempts at Roman imperial reconstruction. This was the impact of barbarian invasions.

**The Celts.** Between 500 B.C. and the birth of Christ a blond, blue-eyed people called the Celts, forced westward by restless Germanic tribes, crossed the Rhine and Danube rivers, poured into Gaul, crossed the English Channel, and took possession of the British Isles. When the Romans conquered Gaul, its Celtic inhabitants became part of the Roman empire. In certain parts of France, such as Brittany, and in Wales, Ireland, and northern Scotland the Celtic language has been perpetuated with little change, because the Germanic tribes who followed the Celts into Europe never succeeded in establishing them-

selves in those areas as they did elsewhere. One of the traits of the Celts has been perpetuated down to this day—the use of mistletoe. The Celtic priests, called Druids, used it as a sacred symbol; today mistletoe plays a part in many people's Christmas festivities.

**The Germanic tribes.** The original homeland of the German people is a matter of conjecture. Some authorities have traced their wanderings back to the great steppes of Russia, which they inhabited about 2000 B.C. They early wandered from their homeland and pushed westward. Behind the retreating Celts the Germans spread out over a large area and gradually split into two great divisions, the Teutons and the Goths. The western group (the Teutons) was made up of such tribal peoples as the Franks, the Alamanni, and the Saxons, living in the main between the Rhine and Elbe and the Baltic Sea and upper Danube region. The eastern group consisted of the Ostrogoths, the Visigoths, and the Vandals. They settled for a time along the lower Danube and the Black Sea.

**Germanic life and customs.** Our earliest accounts of Germanic institutions are those written by Julius Caesar and by the Roman historian Tacitus in his *Germania*. The Germanic people were not savages. They were seminomads, midway between a pastoral and an agricultural economy. The early Roman accounts of the Germans tend to idealize them. Much praise is given for their physical strength and courage, their respect for women, and their freedom from the vices of sophisticated Roman society. Praise was to some extent warranted, but the Germans had their faults too. Their gluttony and heavy drinking were notorious, and their love of gambling caused many a German to wager even his freedom on the throw of the dice. Their respect for women did not prevent the men from having their wives do most of the menial work.

The form of marriage practiced by the Germans was usually monogamy. Adultery seems to have been rare. Tacitus, manlike, omits mention of faithful wives and refers only to what happened when the husband found out that his spouse was faithless. "Its punishment is instant, and at the pleasure of the husband. He cuts off the hair of the offender, strips her, and in the presence of her relations expels her from his house, and pursues her with stripes through the whole village."<sup>4</sup>

Another interesting custom of the Germans was that of listening to bards. On important feast days great storytellers would appear before the assembled warriors and begin to chant old tales handed down by word of mouth for hundreds of years. As the day wore on and night overtook the host, the atmosphere became more and more electric and dramatic as the bards gesticulated and shouted before the leaping flames of the great fire that cast an eerie glow over the audience. Such entertainments were held especially on the eve of battle, when they were designed to instill the old traditions of courage and fortitude into the warriors. The German people detested cowardice above all else. It was expected that no soldier would ever abandon his shield in flight.

The Germans took great care not to spoil their children. As Tacitus says, "No indulgence distinguishes the young master from the slave. They lie together amidst the same cattle, upon the same ground, till age separates, and valor marks out, the freeborn."<sup>5</sup>

The Germans had little money in the usual sense; cattle were used as a measure of value. They had little commerce and practically no manufacturing. In their pattern of culture they were probably about as far advanced as some of the more advanced North American Indian tribes. They worshiped a hierarchy of good and evil gods and goddesses, whom they supplicated and tried to appease. Among their deities were Wotan, the chief of the gods, Thiu and Thor, the gods of war and power respectively, and Freya, the goddess of fertility. The names of these ancient Germanic deities have been perpetuated in the names of four of our days of the week (Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday).

**German political practices.** The Germans were sturdy individualists who enjoyed much personal freedom. This trait was reflected in their political institutions, for their kingships were not hereditary, nor were their kings despotic. The rulers were elected by the tribal assembly, a body composed of all the freemen of the tribe. The assembly also had a voice in determining such basic policies as peace and war.

Every great warrior leader had a retinue of followers, or *comites*, who were tied to him by personal loyalty. In return for their fighting services the chief gave his *comites* food, weap-

ons, and shelter. The band was called the *comitatus*, or *gefolge*. The institution, placing strong emphasis upon personal loyalty, had an important bearing on the rise of feudalism, the characteristic political system of the Middle Ages.

**Germanic law customs.** Perhaps most interesting of all their original customs was the German system of law and justice. There were no written laws. Instead justice was meted out according to the immemorial custom of the tribe. This practice is at the bottom of the development of English common law, which is based not so much on laws passed by legislatures but rather upon a body of developing custom.

Most crimes and grievances were taken care of by the German people themselves, not by the king and his officials. If the injured party was paid compensation by the offender, everybody was satisfied. The principle of compensation was the basis for the whole system of justice. It was rather handy, too. If you entered a free-for-all fight, you could keep in mind a schedule of just how much injury you could afford to inflict on your foes. There was a stipulated payment if you bit someone's ear off, so much for twisting off his nose, and a certain sum for breaking his leg. These payments were called *bots*. In the event that you should lose your temper and actually kill your opponent, you would be called on to pay *wergeld*, a large sum. Incidentally, it cost forty times as much to kill a noble as a common man.

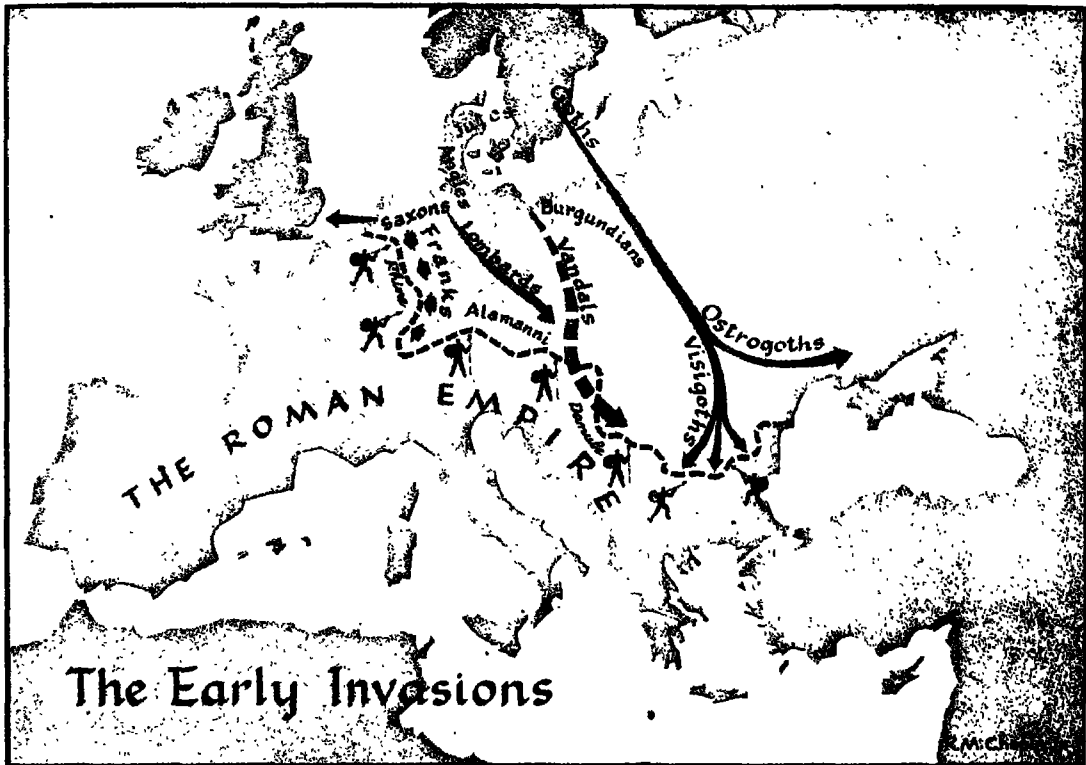
On certain rare occasions the state, that is, the king and his officials, would intervene because the crime was *botless*, that is, it was of such a grave nature that compensation could not be paid. If someone were charged with this crime, a trial would be held, at which the defendant had to produce oath helpers who would swear to his good character. This was called compurgation, a practice also used in settling *bots* in private quarrels. In the event that the defendant was a hardened criminal and could not obtain oath helpers, he had to stand the ordeal. There was little chance of escaping scot free. Three ordeals were used: hot water, hot iron, and cold water. In the first, the defendant had to plunge his arm into a vessel of boiling water and lift out a small stone. A few days were given for his scalded hand to heal; if it had not done so, he was guilty. In the second, the culprit had to walk blindfolded

with bare feet across a floor on which had been placed pieces of red-hot metal. If he succeeded in avoiding the hot metal he was innocent. In the third type of ordeal, the culprit was tightly bound and thrown into a stream. If he floated he was innocent; if he sank he was guilty. No person was given any of these ordeals if there was not a strong presumption of his guilt.

**The early Germanic invasions.** As early as 113 B.C. Germanic tribes had endeavored to break through Rome's frontiers but were turned back. Again in the time of Julius Caesar a group of Germanic tribes tried to conquer eastern Gaul, but their invasion was frustrated by the military genius of Caesar. For a time the Roman rulers planned to conquer and incorporate in their empire all the Germans living between the Rhine and the Elbe rivers, but in the reign of Augustus the design collapsed when a Roman army suffered a serious defeat at the hands of the Germans in 9 A.D. From that time on, the Romans were generally content to hold their frontier at the Rhine-Danube line.

For a century and a half the Germanic tribes caused little trouble, but during the reign of Marcus Aurelius (160-180) the Germans began making determined efforts to get into the empire. Their attempts continued for one hundred fifty years. The Franks invaded Gaul, and the Goths forced the Romans to cede them territory to the northeast of the empire. Few of the invaders, however, were allowed to remain south of the Rhine-Danube frontier, and after the year 300 the Germans remained quiescent for seventy-five years.

But though marauding German bands were ejected from the empire, thousands of German people found a new home among the Romans. During the many centuries in which the Romans and Germans faced each other across the northern frontier, there was much peaceful contact between the two peoples. Many Germans found employment in the Roman legions, large numbers captured in battle were brought to Rome as servants and slaves, and thousands were allowed to settle in the vacant lands of the empire. So far the Romans had been able to keep the Germanic people under control by force of arms, by great walls along the frontiers, by practicing a "divide and rule" policy, utilizing one German tribe to fight against other tribes, by paying the Germans tribute when they got restless, and by over-



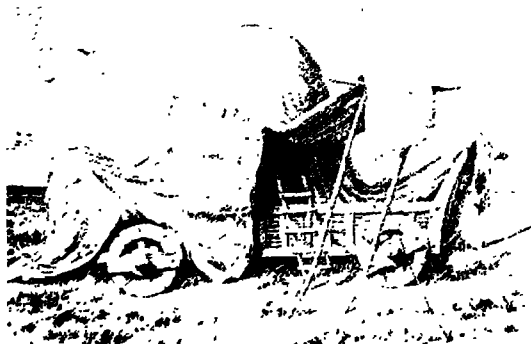
awing them by the magnificence and prestige of Roman culture.

In the last decades of the fourth century, however, these methods proved ineffectual. The period of the great invasions commenced (375-500). The basic factor behind the restlessness of the Germans seems to have been their land hunger. Their numbers were increasing, much of their land consisted of forest and swamp, and their methods of tillage were not efficient. Another impelling cause of the invasions was the German love of adventure and the call of the southern lands of the empire where riches and booty were plentiful.

**The Huns.** In addition to the German tribes, there was another restless people, the Huns. They were mounted nomads from central Asia, who on many occasions throughout history swept into eastern Europe on marauding expeditions. We know very little about these Huns, where they originated, or what prompted them to move westward relentlessly. Reaching Europe in the fourth century they struck terror into the German people, who stood between the Huns and the Roman empire. Old chronicles tell us of the terrible sav-

agery and repulsive appearance of the Huns. They are described as having thick bodies, legs bowed from living in the saddle, flat noses, and small pig-like eyes. Mounted on wiry ponies, the Huns were able to cover great distances in an amazingly short time. "They lived on horseback, and so well did they ride and so much of a piece did they seem with their horses, that all who saw them were reminded at once of Centaurs. Even in their food they did not get away from horses, for they subsisted largely on mare's milk and horseflesh, which they 'cooked' by placing it beneath the cloth that served as a saddle and relying upon the natural results of friction—a method to be recommended only by its simplicity."<sup>6</sup>

**Adrianople.** In the year 372 the Huns crossed the Volga and soon subjugated the Ostrogoths. Terrified at the prospect of being conquered by the savage Hun horsemen, the Visigoths begged the Roman officials to allow them to seek safety in the empire. Permission was granted, and in 376 a large concourse of people crossed the Danube into Roman territory. The Visigoths had been promised food and lands, but these were not given



*This Hunnish wagon (reconstructed) was ample for moving supplies and provided a home for the nomads at the same time.*

in sufficient quantities, and further, the Roman officials irritated the newcomers by imposing many petty restrictions upon them. In desperation the Visigoths turned upon the Roman officials and began to pillage the land. To meet the threat, the emperor Valens led an army to give battle to the rebellious Germans. In the ensuing battle at Adrianople (378) the legions were totally defeated and the emperor Valens was killed.

**Wholesale barbarian invasions.** Adrianople was a momentous event. The legend of the invincibility of the Roman legions had now been destroyed. The battle marks the beginning of a terrible period of chaos lasting one hundred fifty years, in which barbarian tribes moved almost at will on the empire and completely destroyed the old governmental system in the western part of the empire. For a few years, under the strong rule of the emperor Theodosius, the victorious Visigoths remained quiescent, but following his death in 395 they began to migrate and pillage under their leader Alaric. After much fighting and wandering Alaric invaded Italy, and in 410 his followers sacked Rome. In the same year Alaric died. His successor made peace with the Roman officials and was assigned a large tract of territory in southern Gaul. Here the Visigoths created a powerful kingdom, which at its height covered all of southern Gaul and most of Spain.

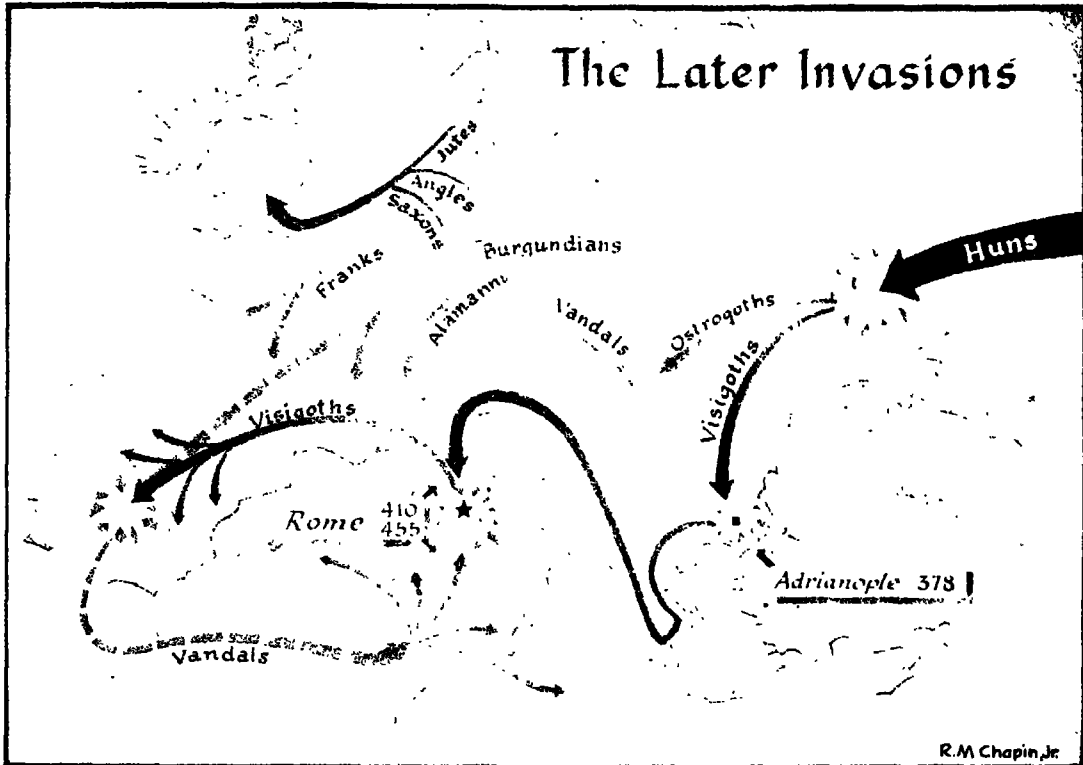
The march of the Visigoths under Alaric was the signal for wholesale invasion by the Germans all along the northern frontier. In 406 Roman defenses collapsed in the Rhine area, and a flood of Germans crossed into Gaul. Vandals, Alamanni, Franks, and Burgundians

pushed aside all resistance and settled in the empire. The Vandals first made their way through Gaul to Spain, but pressure from Visigoths who also entered the peninsula caused them to cross to Africa, where they established a strong kingdom under their leader Gaiseric (see map, page 203). The high point of their power came in 455 when the Vandals crossed over from Africa and sacked Rome. Their kingdom was not destined to endure, for the great Justinian, sixth-century Roman emperor in the east, later crushed it with his armies.

The Burgundians settled in the Rhone valley, but their kingdom, like those of the Vandals and the Visigoths, did not last. Reaching a high degree of prosperity in the early fifth century (see map, page 203), it soon passed under the rule of another Germanic people, the Franks, who gradually conquered all of northern Gaul. We shall see later how the Franks were, with the exception of the Angles and Saxons in England, the only Germanic tribe entering the confines of the Roman empire to perpetuate their kingdom into the early Middle Ages.

**Defeat of the Huns.** While the Germanic peoples were relentlessly moving and cutting their way through the western part of the empire, a new danger arose which for a time menaced both the Germans and the Roman provincial people alike. The Huns under their leader Attila left their homes along the lower Danube and marched through Germany and crossed the Rhine in 451. In the great battle of Châlons Germans and Romans fought side by side to stem the Hunnish invaders (see map opposite). Attila was forced to withdraw from Gaul. For a brief time he menaced Italy, but in 453 his death lessened the power of the Huns. Leaderless, the nomad bands broke up, and their power quickly evaporated.

**Rome during the invasions.** During the period of turbulence, what was happening to the imperial authority at Rome? Following the death of the capable Theodosius (395), the empire was divided between his two sons, Arcadius in the east and Honorius in the west. The sack of Rome in 410 by Alaric and again in 455 by Gaiseric did not destroy Roman civilization (although the city was plundered), but Roman rule grew increasingly decadent and powerless. Honorius, who ruled as emperor in Italy from 395 to 423, was utterly incompetent, and his successors were mere puppet em-

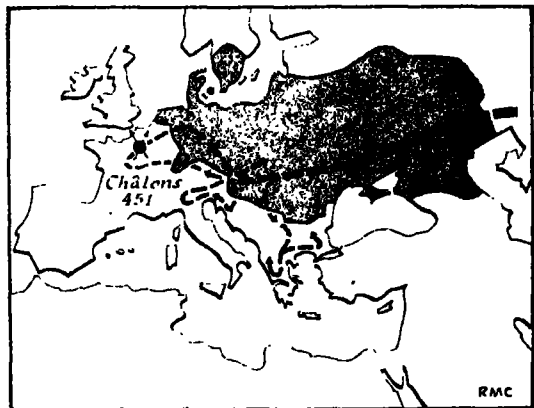


perors. The real power was exercised by leaders of the mercenary soldiers, whose ranks were now mainly German.

For seventeen years following the second gutting of Rome in 455 by the Vandals the choice of the emperor was dictated by a German general in the imperial army. After his death the role of political boss in Italy was assumed by Orestes, a former officer in Attila's army, who placed his small son on the throne. Put there by the consent of the ruffianly soldiery, the new emperor was satirically dubbed Romulus Augustulus (Little Augustus).

**476 A.D.** Three years later Orestes lost favor with the army, and another leader of the soldiers, a German named Odoacer (or Odovacer) came to the fore. Odoacer, seeing no reason for carrying on the sham of emperors, deposed little Augustus and proclaimed himself head of the government. His action, taken in 476 A.D., just short of a century after the battle of Adrianople, is usually regarded as the most convenient event to mark the fall of Rome. In reality this date is no more important than several others that might be selected, such as 410 or 455. No single date

for the fall of Rome is really accurate, since the fall was a long and gradual process. Notwithstanding such considerations, the date 476 A.D. is perhaps the one best date to represent the end of the Roman empire in the west, for it marks the end of the long line of emperors inaugurated by Augustus and the outright control of Italian politics by Germanic



*The Huns under Attila created a large if ephemeral empire which threatened to engulf all Europe before they were turned back at Châlons.*



leaders. It is true that Odoacer did accept in theory the overlordship of the eastern emperor in Constantinople, who, now that the emperors in Rome were no more, considered Italy as one of his administrative divisions. But in reality Constantinople had little power in the west, which was now in the hands of the Germans.

*Theodoric's kingdom in Italy.* We have seen how the Visigoths created a strong kingdom in Spain while their kinfolk, the Ostrogoths, were under the harsh rule of the Huns. Following the defeat of Attila at Châlons the Ostrogoths were free to follow their own inclinations. For twenty years after their freedom from the Huns the Ostrogoths seemed uncertain what to do, but in 476 a young Ostrogothic noble named Theodoric became their leader and in no time galvanized his people into action. Theodoric is one of the most important of all the early German leaders. At the age of seven he was sent to Constantinople as a hostage. There he learned to admire and appreciate the learning and splendor of the great city. After receiving a good education, he went back to his people at the age of eighteen and became their leader. It was Theodoric's desire to lead his people so that they could get some of the good things he himself had learned to enjoy while a captive in Constantinople.

Zeno, emperor in the east, feared the ambitious Theodoric and was glad to offer him the commission of reconquering for the imperial authority the province of Italy, now in the hands of the German leader Odoacer. Accepting the offer, Theodoric in 488 led more than 100,000 of his people into Italy. Three years of hard fighting followed. Odoacer sued for peace and was treacherously murdered. Theodoric now established a strong Gothic kingdom in Italy, which lasted until its destruction in 555 by Belisarius, one of Justinian's generals from the eastern empire.

Under its Ostrogothic king Italy enjoyed a generation of peace and tranquillity. There was little change in the structure of the Roman government. Every attempt was made to preserve Roman civilization. At Theodoric's court at Ravenna Latin was used, the Roman law was retained, and coins were issued in the name of the eastern emperor, for Theodoric regarded himself as an imperial official. This wise statesman maintained schools and tried to

repair the Roman aqueducts. Following the death of Theodoric in 526, civil war and factionalism broke out in Italy, paving the way for its conquest by Justinian.

*The Lombards.* A few years after the destruction of the Ostrogothic kingdom by Justinian's armies, a new wave of Germanic invaders, the Lombards, poured into northern Italy. They are reputed to have been the most brutal and fierce of all the Germans. A history written in the eighth century relates the story of one Lombard king, Alboin, who had a drinking cup fashioned from the skull of one of the enemies he had killed with his own hand. It is also claimed that Alboin forced his dead rival's daughter to marry him and compelled her to drink from her father's skull. The insult had a sequel, for later the wife of Alboin got revenge upon her brutal husband by artistically arranging for his murder. Entering Italy in 568, the fierce Lombards overran most of Italy and established a powerful kingdom which endured until 774.

*The barbarians in England.* When the great German invasions began, Roman authorities began withdrawing the legions from the outposts of their empire. The last Roman troops left England in 407. They left the island defenseless, and within a generation swarms of Angles, Saxons, and Jutes from the base of the Danish peninsula and the German lowlands invaded Britain and took possession of most of the country (see map, page 199). The Germanic conquest in England seems to have been more devastating than in any other area of the empire. Roman civilization seems to have been almost completely obliterated. Life in England during the fifth and sixth centuries was a tragic experience for its Celtic inhabitants, who were often butchered or driven to the western highlands of the island. Not only was there fighting between the German invaders and the Celts, but the Germanic tribes also struggled among themselves.

*The demise of the Roman empire.* In less than one hundred years after the Germanic tribes had swarmed over the Rhine-Danube frontier in 406, the western Roman world saw a Visigothic kingdom created in Spain, Vandal tribes established in north Africa, the Burgundians in possession of southeastern Gaul, the Franks settled in the northern half of that country, and a Gothic kingdom flourishing in Italy, first under Odoacer, then under Theo-

doric (see map, page 203). The historian may have difficulty in deciding just what event, if any, should be singled out as the fall of Rome, but by 500 A.D. there can be no question that the Roman empire in the west was no more.

**Fundamental causes of Roman collapse.** There have been many explanations advanced to explain the great catastrophe. Some historians rely mainly upon political factors as the key to the problem, such as the graft of an entrenched bureaucracy, the unsatisfactory system of imperial succession, and the decline in Roman patriotism. Some also emphasize that the empire was doomed to extinction because its civilization—its art, wealth, villas, education, security—belonged to the upper classes, not to the people. A reasonably good standard of living and an effective influence in government were denied the common people. Corruption and final collapse is the usual fate of governments run by bureaucrats whose actions are not tempered by the power of the common people, under a system of self-government, to remove from office and even punish corrupt officials. Perhaps it is no exaggeration to assert that the entire history of mankind can be interpreted as a struggle for liberty. Again and again, as we follow man through time, that theme dominates history.

Historians with an economic outlook present us with a long list of causes for the fall of Rome, among them currency debasement, soil exhaustion, and the disappearance of a free peasantry. Other students seem to prefer a biological explanation which stresses the evils of race mixture. They maintain that the Romans were a superior people and that their mixing with "inferior races" weakened their physical virility and destroyed their intellectual creativeness. There are few authorities who accept the thesis that mixture of peoples results in a weak racial product.

Another common view is that Rome declined because of its immorality, a view held especially by the early Christians. However, the period when vice was most rampant in Rome was from 50 to 100 A.D., and with the exception of that period the Romans can hardly be regarded as more immoral than any other people of their time. It was hardly immorality that brought about the collapse of Rome; rather it was a weakening of morale, or, as Sir Gilbert Murray puts it, the Romans "lost their nerve." One of the most competent

students of Roman history believes that the ultimate failure of Rome must be attributed to her too complete success. She conquered all rivals, easily acquired wealth and power, and imported a ready-made culture from conquered peoples. Indolence and self-satisfaction resulted. "Thus . . . in the case of the Roman empire, a steady decline of civilization is not to be traced to physical degeneration, or to any debasement of blood in the higher races due to slavery, or to political and economic conditions, but rather to a changed attitude of men's minds."<sup>7</sup>

**Causation in history.** As we look back on one thousand years of Roman history, questions must arise: Why did Rome rise and fall? What started her on her career of expansion and imperial destiny? What initiated her decline and final collapse? These questions apply not only to Rome; already in studying the course of civilization to about 500 A.D. we have seen the rise of many powerful nations and their decline. Civilizations seem, in their development, to follow an organic parallel: infancy, youth, vigorous manhood, old age, senility, and oblivion. As we ponder these facts, the question arises, is there a cyclical movement inherent in the history of civilizations?

**Theories of historical cycles.** Much thought has been expended on this interesting problem, with the result that some scholars maintain that the story of civilization is made up of a series of civilizations with "life analogies." Perhaps the most significant of these thinkers is Oswald Spengler, a German who wrote a massive book during the First World War entitled *Decline of the West*. In this treatise he paints the whole panorama of human experience and sees it as the manifestation of eight super-cycles of civilization: the Chinese, the Babylonian, the East Indian, the Greco-Roman, the Arabian, the Mayan of Mexico, and the western of our own day. In pessimistic vein Spengler declares that our civilization reached its zenith about 1800 and during the past 150 years has been rapidly declining. Another important interpreter of the historical process is the English scholar Arnold J. Toynbee. His work, *A Study of History*, while not yet completed, makes a profound analysis of twenty-six great civilizations. Although Toynbee has not yet given his final conclusions on the "whys" and "hows" of history it can be said that he does not accept the hard and fast

cycle theory of Spengler that all civilizations are fated to rise and fall.

**The linear theory.** The linear theory accepted by some historians is much more optimistic. In brief, the linear theory envisages human experience as a stream of water that begins its journey as a small rivulet. As it flows on through the ages many peoples and civilizations enrich and increase its waters. The important thing is not that civilizations come and go but that all of them contribute to the stream of history, which gets broader and richer as time goes on.

**Schools of historical thought.** The problem of historical causation is a fascinating one. The beginning student, however, must content himself at first with becoming conversant with the basic facts of history. Only then can he commence the much more difficult task of seeking to understand the forces and processes which explain, or at least throw light upon, the unfolding of history. But there are a few general concepts or schools that the beginning student of history can sometimes find useful in understanding what he reads.

The political school, for example, maintains that history is past politics, that its most important theme and its most significant facts relate to wars, alliances, treaties, and diplomatic intrigue. In studying the collapse of Rome, the historians of this school would emphasize the part the military commanders played in dictating the succession of the emperors and the gradual development of a despotic oriental rule.

The great-man school, associated particularly with the British historian Thomas Carlyle, stresses the part that outstanding leaders have played in determining the course of human events. Adherents of this viewpoint believe that personality is all-important in history. They would maintain that Rome ceased to produce the right kind of leadership, that soft living and graft destroyed the class which had once given the state incomparable generals, administrators, and lawgivers.

The economic, or materialistic, conception of history maintains that man's imperative need for food and clothing, his zealotry for economic gain, and the many resulting institutions associated with the production, distribution, and consumption of goods constitute the mainspring of historical events. The economic historians can find much in the history of

Rome to back their theories. The collapse of the sturdy peasant class and the advent of the *latifundia* with their servile cultivators, the destruction of the middle class (or, as we would say today, the white-collar class) because of high taxation, the unfortunate tinkering with the currency which led to violent and unpredictable fluctuations in prices, the inability of Rome to work out a satisfactory economic system after the wiping out of its small farm population—all these were significant economic causes for the end of Roman supremacy.

The geographical school, already commented upon in Chapter 1, stresses the interrelation between natural resources and physical environment on the one hand and man's institutions and activities on the other. It would point to the possible importance of the diminution in rainfall in the Roman empire and its effect upon crop yields. Then again it would direct attention to the problem of erosion, which apparently became quite serious in certain areas and influenced the imperial economic structure.

Other schools focus their attention upon the influence of ideas, which may be called the intellectual interpretation of history; or upon the development of pure science and technology, the scientific school of history; or upon the anthropological approach, which stresses the importance of such cultural processes as diffusion (discussed in Chapter 1) in the development of civilization. And the spiritual, or teleological, school believes that behind the movements of history is the guidance of a Divine Will, which directs human destinies to conform with some great cosmic plan or goal.

**Trends in interpretation of history.** In reviewing historical schools or various interpretations of history, we can say that most historians agree that in the past political facts in history have received too much emphasis. That type can be called "drum and trumpet history." Many historians also agree that in any one period of history one or more factors—economic or religious or geographic, and so on—will be predominant and will then in the next period give way to another set of factors. More and more, historians today are recognizing that the historical process is a complex product resulting from the interaction of all the various factors we have mentioned.

Reference to the various schools of history has given us a glance into the field of historical causation. History may be made more interesting and perhaps more meaningful if we try

occasionally to appraise and analyze events in terms of the various schools of history and to see which sets of factors operate to bring about certain events.

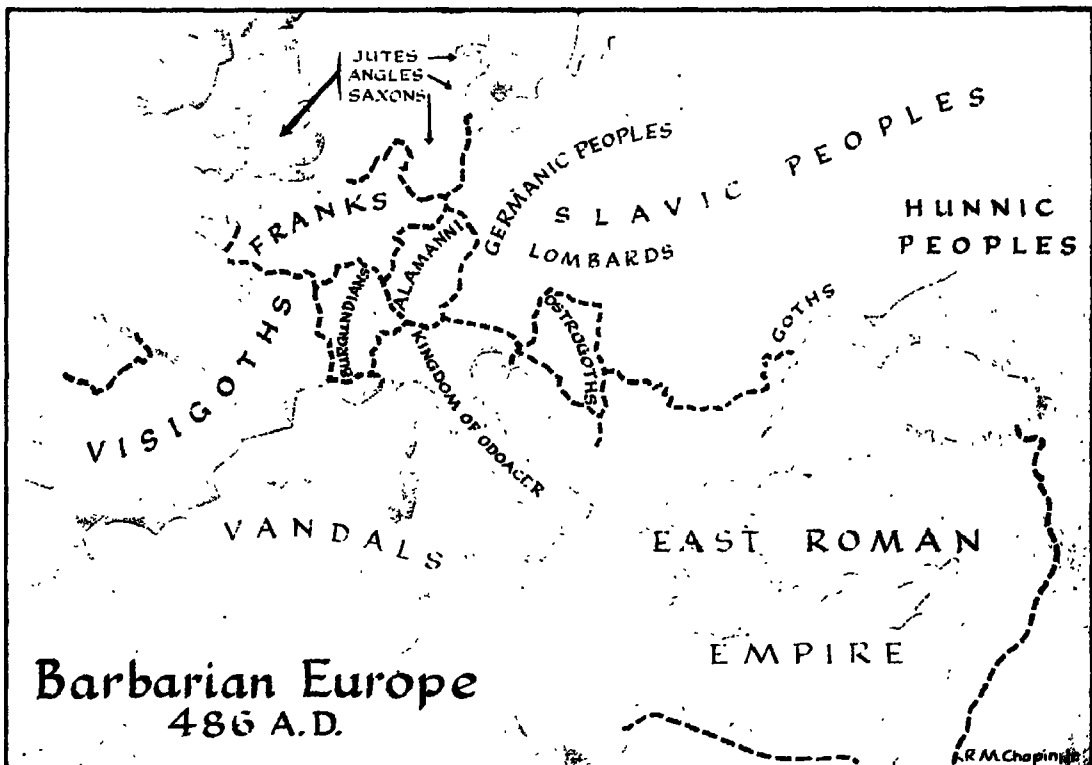
### *The Fusion of Cultures*

**T**he nature of the invasions. Now that we have traced the various streams of German invaders that broke through the frontiers and established themselves in the Roman empire, it is essential that something be said about the character of these invasions. Did the Germans annihilate large sections of the Roman population? Was there much pillaging and looting? Was the powerful civilization that Rome had created destroyed?

In answering such questions it is important to understand that infiltration of Germans into the empire had been going on several hundred years before the great invasions of the fifth century. Thousands of Germans had been permitted to settle on vacant lands or serve in the legions. Before the terrible chaos of the fifth century a process of culture fusion, or blend-

ing, was taking place peacefully and imperceptibly. The Germans living in the empire were taking on the culture of the more civilized Romans around them. If the pressure of the Huns on the Gothic tribes had not become so acute in the fourth century, it is probable that the infiltration of the Germans would have continued to be peaceful. But the menace of the Huns accelerated the movement of the German tribes, and what had formerly been a rather gradual and peaceful activity soon became a pell-mell attack on the frontiers.

Although superficially the great invasions seemed entirely different from the former peaceful infiltration of the Germans, they were not fundamentally different in character. It is true that there was at times ruthless pillaging by the invaders, and in certain sections of the



empire, especially in Britain, Roman civilization was entirely wiped out. The Germans seized much of Roman land; perhaps as much as two thirds exchanged ownership. In the main, however, the blending and fusing of the two peoples, which had been going on before the period of the great invasions, continued without serious interruption. The barbarian invasions, in other words, must not be regarded as cataclysmic.

In most of the areas of the empire the invaders represented a minority of the population. Although they were the political enemies of the Roman government, they admired Roman civilization and tried to assimilate it. This explains why the invader soon began to lose his Germanic speech, customs, and religion. Most of the Germanic leaders continued to use Roman administrative agencies, employed members of the old civil service, and perpetuated the use of Latin in governmental affairs. That is why there is hardly a trace of the Germanic languages in Italy, Gaul, and Spain. While the invader was assimilating Roman civilization, life for the people of the empire went on much as usual.

**Civilization during the Dark Ages.** While the new and the old were being blended, there was a decline in civilization, and trade and commerce suffered a setback. For nearly five hundred years after the great invasions of the fifth century European civilization was unsettled. It retrogressed rather than advanced. But the period of the so-called Dark Ages was one of preparation, in which a new civilization, even more fruitful than the old, compounded of both Germanic and Roman elements, was being evolved.

The immediate effect, however, was the decline of city life. Abandoned Roman cities soon collapsed in ruins. There was also a serious decline in learning, art, and architecture. Soon there were few scholars who knew how to write good Latin. The Bishop of Tours, writing in the sixth century, lamented, "In these times when the practice of letters declines, nay, rather perishes in the cities of Gaul, there has been found no scholar trained in the art of ordered composition to present in prose or verse a picture of the things that have befallen. . . ."<sup>8</sup> Along with the decline of literary Latin went a decline of the knowledge of Greek, as contact with Constantinople and the eastern part of the empire was broken off.

**Scholars of the transition period.** Enlightenment and learning, of course, did not entirely die out in western Europe. The most important scholar in the west in the early sixth century was Boethius, who lived in Italy and was a member of a noble Roman family. Having received an excellent education, he entered the government service of the Visigothic king Theodoric, when the latter established his kingdom in Italy. In his spare time Boethius busied himself making Latin translations of Greek works. His translations were the only source of Greek learning available to medieval scholars until, six hundred years later, as we shall see, more complete accounts were obtained through Arabic sources. Boethius' importance is as a transmitter of classical thought to the Middle Ages. Unjustly accused of treachery by Theodoric, Boethius was thrown into prison and while awaiting execution wrote the famous *Consolations of Philosophy*. The work deals with the basic questions of man's existence and was one of the most popular philosophical treatises during the Middle Ages. It is still being read by students of philosophy today.

Another important scholar, a contemporary of Boethius, was Cassiodorus. He too served Theodoric for a time, retiring to found two monasteries. He devoted the remainder of his long life (he lived to be over ninety) to the preservation and collection of learning. He was not what we call a productive scholar, but he preserved a vast amount of classical learning. Cassiodorus did much to make monasteries centers of learning, for he encouraged the monks to copy and transcribe valuable manuscripts. Soon practically all monasteries had scriptoriums, departments concerned exclusively with the copying of manuscripts.

Another scholar of some importance was Isidore of Seville, who was bishop of Seville from 600 to 636. His most important work was his *Etymologies*, a fascinating encyclopedia that included a jumble of queer odds and ends taken from classical sources. It reminds one of Pliny's *Natural History*. Isidore was an important preserver of knowledge, and for three hundred years his *Etymologies* was a standard work of reference in the western world.

In the early Middle Ages there was a dearth of good historians. The only worthy predecessor of the Venerable Bede, who will be dis-

cussed shortly, was Gregory of Tours. Living in the sixth century, this bishop has left us the only good source material for the early history of the Franks, one of the most important of the Germanic tribes which broke through the Roman frontiers and poured into the empire in the chaotic fifth century.

**The role of the Church.** As the Roman empire declined and finally collapsed, the Christian Church became the most important agency in assisting the fusion between the German and Roman cultures. The Church, more than anything else, fostered learning and cushioned the shock of the impact between German and Roman. As the uncouth Germans were converted, they became less warlike and more amenable to Roman culture, and came to be supporters of law and order.

When the Roman government collapsed, the Church assumed many of its secular responsibilities. This is illustrated in the famous incident of Pope Leo I and Attila the Hun. Attila was dissuaded by the Pope from attacking Rome. The political power of the papacy was especially increased during the pontificate of Gregory the Great (590-604), who assumed the responsibility of defending Rome from the Lombards. Gregory, it is said, "ordered the police, regulated markets, coined money, maintained civil and criminal courts, repaired the walls and aqueducts, supported schools and hospitals, commanded the militia, and defended the city in case of attack."<sup>9</sup>

**The Church's missionary activity.** Another great contribution of the early Church was its missionary activity, which was not only a Christianizing movement but one which disseminated civilization. One of the earliest Christian missionaries to the Germans was Ulfilas (about 311-383), who spent forty years among the Visigoths. He translated the Bible into Gothic, an important event, for heretofore the Germans had had no satisfactory system of writing. The labors of Ulfilas were the beginning of the spread of Christianity among many of the German tribes.

Another great figure in early missionary work was St. Patrick, who was born in Britain about 389. He became a monk in Gaul and later went to Ireland as a missionary. As a result of his activities Christianity obtained a strong foothold in Ireland, centering around monasteries. These monasteries became the nuclei of a remarkable civilization. The learn-



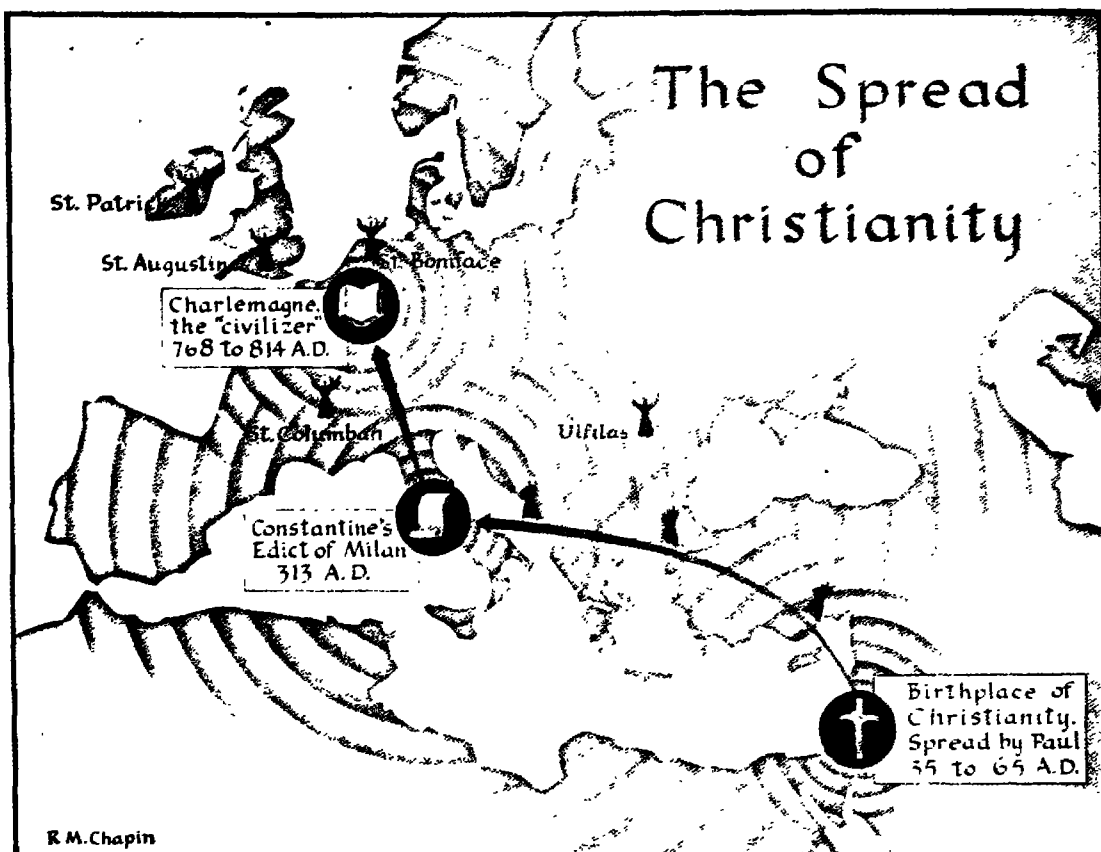
*This is the carved ivory cover of a medieval religious book, now in the Church of Hildesheim, Germany.*

ing of the Irish monks in the sixth century was unsurpassed in Europe. Other important missionary figures were St. Columban, an Irish monk who came from Britain to Burgundy, and St. Boniface, who likewise came from England and spent thirty-five years among wild German tribes.

Pope Gregory the Great was active in furthering missionary work. In 596 he sent St. Augustine to England, where the first Christian Church among the Anglo-Saxons was established.

**Monasteries.** Besides the Church's assumption of political obligations and its missionary work, the founding of monasteries was another very important activity in furthering the fusion of cultures and the preservation of learning in the early Middle Ages. We have already seen how Cassiodorus helped make the monasteries centers of learning in the Dark Ages and how the Irish monasteries developed a high degree of civilization. Let us go back for a moment and examine the nature of the monasteries and their growth.

The monastic way of life originated long before the birth of Christianity. There have been men in all ages who believed that the world around them was sinful and that the ordinary routine of life detracted from one's



ability to serve his God and achieve spiritual serenity. The only solution they saw was to isolate themselves from the snares and materialistic preoccupations of the world. Christian monasticism originated in the east in the third century and was influenced in its development by such monastic leaders as St. Anthony and Basil the Great.

The monasteries were agricultural pioneers in Europe. In the early Middle Ages much of the land was forest or swamp; two thirds of France was covered with forest as late as 750 A.D. Monks drained the swamps and felled the forests. Of the Cistercian monks in England it was said, "They turned the waste land into good land; they planted the trees; they improved the streams; they made corn grow where thistles had sprung unchecked; they filled the meadows with cattle and stocked the uplands with sheep."<sup>10</sup>

Perhaps the most significant contribution of monasticism was the preservation of learning. Most of the few schools existing in the

early Middle Ages were in the monasteries. In the monasteries monks in the scriptoriums labored at copying and preserving the few remaining precious works of classical antiquity. In a monastery in the north of England the Venerable Bede (673-735), one of the few great scholars of his day, pursued his studies. Bede is most famous for his *Ecclesiastical History of the English Nation*, the best account we have for almost two hundred years of English history, notable for its excellent historical writing and its fine prose style.

**The Franks.** In the amalgamating of the Roman and Germanic peoples and cultures, the part played by a group of German tribes called the Franks was especially significant. As we shall see, the Franks became the first pillar of a new civilization in Europe. Of several tribes of Franks, the Salians and Ripuarians were the most important. The former lived in the valley of the Rhine close to the sea, while the latter settled along the right bank of the Rhine River.

**Clovis.** Early in the fifth century the Franks began to move into northern Gaul. Under the Salian king Clovis I (465?-511) the Franks began a remarkable career of conquest that was to make them the most powerful and influential people in the west. Clovis, an ambitious and thoroughly unscrupulous ruler, first disposed of Syagrius, a Roman general, who represented the last foothold of Roman authority in central Gaul. The victory was achieved in 486. After ten years of fighting Clovis next subjugated the Alamanni, and a little later he forced the Burgundians to become his allies and pushed the Visigoths out of southern Gaul.

Clovis had married a Christian Burgundian princess named Clotilda, and perhaps largely through her influence he became converted to Christianity. His conversion made him the only orthodox Christian ruler in the west, for the other Germanic tribes were either pagans or embraced some heretical form of Christianity, such as Arianism. The conversion of Clovis in 496 was a momentous event in European history. The Franks, now orthodox Christians, were able to combine the political conquest of their pagan or unorthodox neighbors with the forcible expansion of orthodox Christianity. So far as the papacy was concerned, the expansion of the aggressive Franks meant that its missionary activities were expanded. Civilization was thus disseminated, as monasteries, churches, and schools followed in the wake of the victorious Franks. Before Clovis died, he was in control of practically all of Gaul.

**The later Merovingians.** The Merovingians, as we call the rulers of the house of Clovis, continued the process of conquest, but in the latter part of the sixth century the grandsons of the redoubtable Clovis began to show weaknesses that threatened to nullify the achievements of the founder of Merovingian power. Civil wars broke out, and the Frankish kingdom split into warring divisions. The later Merovingian kings came to be called the *rois fainéants* (do-nothing kings). The real power was exercised by the king's chief minister, called the mayor of the palace.

During the days of weak government in the last decades of the sixth and in the first half of the seventh century, commercial activity lagged. Agriculture was all-important, and large parts of western Europe were divided into

small, self-sufficient units based on a crude agricultural economy. In these dark days we can perceive the first development of feudalism. The number of freemen decreased and a new landed aristocracy came into being, whose main function was to provide mounted fighting men to the ruler. Many of the great landlords obtained a wide measure of local independence. Out of these elements—depressed freemen, the mounted knight, and local independence—feudalism finally emerged in complete form in the early tenth century.

**The Carolingian line.** In the eighth century Charles Martel, a mayor of the palace, established the importance of his family by defeating a large Saracen army at the battle of Tours in 732 and restoring a large degree of unity to the Frankish realm. His son, Pepin the Short, obtained the sanction and the blessing of the Pope to declare himself the legal, or *de jure*, ruler of the Frankish nation. The event ended the Merovingian dynasty and established the supremacy of the Carolingian line, under which Gaul and other territories were united in one government from 751 to 888. By sanctioning the deposition of the decadent Merovingians, the papacy further cemented the alliance that had been born when Clovis became converted in 496. The papacy, in approving Pepin's seizure, also strengthened its claim to be superior to any secular ruler. However, this assertion was often challenged, and in the later Middle Ages it was to have tragic consequences when kings and Popes waged relentless war against each other.

**Charlemagne (742?-814).** Under Pepin's son the Carolingians reached the height of their power. Pepin was succeeded upon his death in 768 by Charlemagne, one of the most outstanding figures in European history. This great ruler, a lover of learning and a zealous spreader of Christianity, was imbued with the ambition of subjugating as many people as possible and at the same time forcing them to become Christians. In this way he carried on the policies of the first Merovingian, Clovis, but on a much grander scale. Answering an appeal of the Pope requesting aid against the Lombards, Charlemagne sped to Italy, conquered the Lombards, and assumed the title King of the Lombards. This gave him control over a large part of the Italian peninsula.

Charlemagne's greatest conquest was carried out against the heathen Saxon tribes who





*An idealized study of Charlemagne shows him with the imperial crown and other symbols of authority.*

lived between the Rhine and the Elbe rivers. He waged twenty campaigns against the Saxons, who finally submitted to his political control and accepted Christianity. At its height the Carolingian empire included most of western Europe (see map, opposite page). His empire was not surpassed until the conquests of Napoleon in the early nineteenth century.

The acquisition of a great empire by Char-

lemagne had one very important consequence. On Christmas day in the year 800, while Charlemagne was attending service in the Church of St. Peter, Pope Leo III placed a crown on his head while those in attendance proclaimed him Emperor of the Romans. The ceremony demonstrated that the memory of the once-great Roman empire still lived as a very vital tradition in the hearts of men in Europe. There was a strong desire to reestablish the political unity that had existed in Europe before the great invasions of the fifth century. The tradition of imperial unity endured even after the collapse of Charlemagne's empire; it was resurrected in 962 by a German king who ruled over what came to be called the Holy Roman Empire, which theoretically lasted until 1806, when it was dissolved by Napoleon.

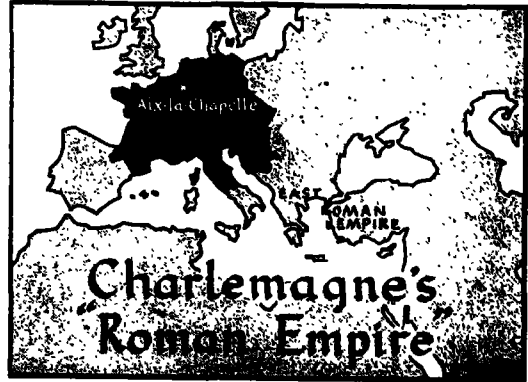
**Civilization under Charlemagne.** Charlemagne has been called "the civilizer." His conquests, while often brutal at the outset, were ultimately the means of spreading Christian civilization. The governmental structure of his empire gave to the peoples of western Europe the best administration they had enjoyed since the good days of the Roman empire. A strong army maintained peace within the Carolingian territories, the capitularies, or laws, of the central government guaranteed more civilized justice to the people, and the *missi dominici*, special itinerant agents of the emperor, traversed the realm, taking care that the local officials were not rapacious or cruel.

In the field of learning, Charlemagne was so concerned with advancing education and scholarship that historians speak of his efforts in that direction as the Carolingian Renaissance. Charlemagne decreed in a law of 789 that every monastery and abbey was to have its school. Latin came to be written with greater care, and great improvements were made in the style of handwriting. Charlemagne's most famous educational accomplishment was his Palace School at Aix-la-Chapelle, the Carolingian capital. Here the children of the emperor and his nobles were instructed, and even those of a few commoners were admitted. The head of the school was Alcuin, a pupil of one of Bede's students, who had been educated at the York Cathedral School in England. The influence of the Palace School radiated throughout Gaul and Germany and stimulated educational activities in the monasteries.

*The decline of the Frankish empire.* The greatness of the Frankish empire had been the work of three outstanding statesmen: Charles Martel, Pepin, and Charlemagne. After the death of Charlemagne, however, the empire was ruled by weak, incompetent emperors, so that the great political structure which reached the climax of its glory in the coronation of Charlemagne at Rome in 800 completely disappeared by the end of the tenth century.

The creation of the Carolingian empire was a brilliant achievement. It greatly assisted the process of blending German and Roman into a new cultural synthesis. The Carolingian Renaissance helped keep the light of civilization burning, but Europe was not yet ready for the civilization and political solidarity that Charlemagne envisaged. After the fall of his empire Europe suffered another period of confusion, aggravated by invasions of Northmen.

Out of the failure of the Carolingian empire to achieve political unity there developed a type of social control called feudalism, which



was an outstanding characteristic of the Middle Ages (see Chapter 12). Meanwhile the impetus given to learning by Charlemagne was not completely lost in the anarchic ninth century; and gradually, as stable government and better economic conditions emerged, western Europe experienced, as we shall see in Chapter 14, an intense and fruitful period of intellectual and artistic activity.

### *Summary*

The events discussed in this chapter cover, roughly, the period from 180 to 800. It was the great era of transition from classical to medieval civilization. The conventional date, 476, for the fall of Rome is usually accepted as the termination of ancient, or classical, history. Western European history for approximately the next one thousand years is described as medieval. The period covered by this chapter is known as early medieval times or, as it is sometimes called, the Dark Ages.

The latter part of the second century A.D. was a period of rapid decline in the Roman empire. The downward trend was arrested by the capable rulers Diocletian and Constantine. The principate was now quite forgotten. In its place were an oriental despotism and a centralized bureaucracy. In the long run the extreme measures taken by Diocletian and Constantine to arrest the decline only exaggerated the evils from which the Roman world was suffering. The chief evils were interference in the government by the irresponsible soldiery, the destruction of the middle class, the decrease of commerce, the consequent decline of the prosperity of the city-states, and land monopoly.

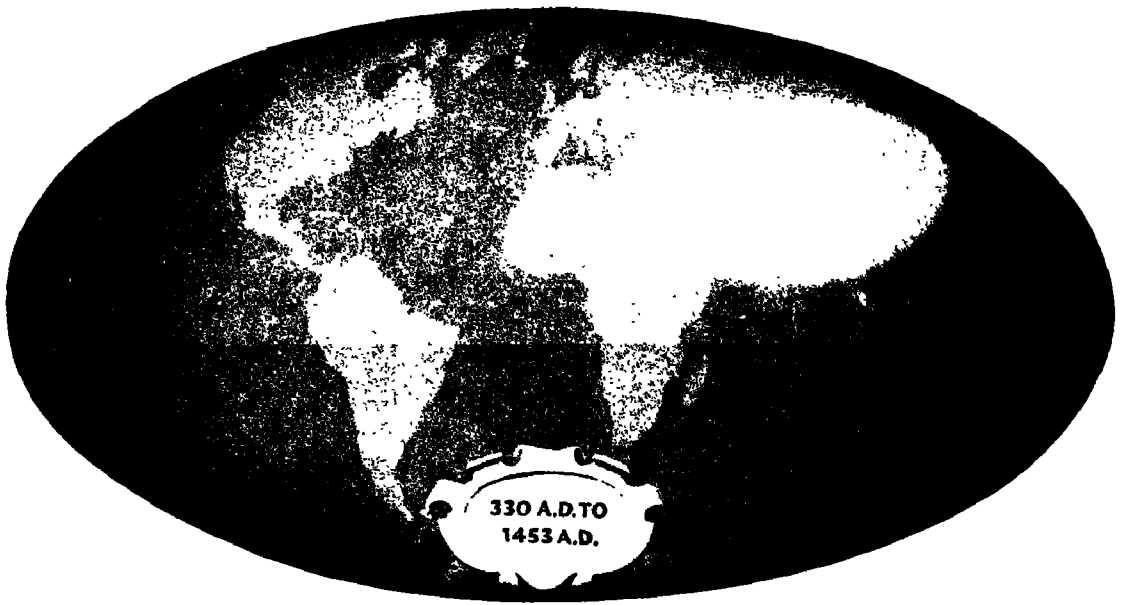
In the face of such conditions men were sick at heart. They turned to appealing oriental religions for escape. It soon became apparent that the most satisfactory religion was Christianity, whose founder, Jesus, preached a spiritually inspiring message of love and helpfulness and a better world to come. Although He attracted relatively few adherents during His short ministry, His followers rapidly increased after His martyrdom. In the spread of Christianity the work of Paul was particularly important.

The fall of Rome started a widespread process of culture fusion in Europe, a process which blended Roman and Teuton into a new people. The Germans were the political

enemies of Rome, but they admired Roman civilization and were eager to assimilate it. The Christian Church assisted materially in the fusion of barbarian and Roman, by helping to restrain the uncouth conqueror and dissuade him at times from acts of wanton destructiveness. Finally, the Church converted and transformed the wild Teuton into an agent of law, order, and civilization. The Church assumed great political power in this transitional period in European history. It also preserved learning and cooperated with the most promising Germanic nation, the Franks, who, under a series of great leaders ending with Charlemagne, succeeded in creating a civilized empire.

It should be pointed out that we have been concerned only with the events following the end of Roman authority in the west. The eastern, or Byzantine, empire, as it came to be called, continued to flourish for a thousand years and made many contributions to civilization. The Byzantine empire will be treated in the next chapter.

The assimilation of Roman culture by the German tribes meant much more than the mere perpetuation of a purely Roman civilization. Roman civilization, it will be recalled, had borrowed in a large measure from the Greeks who were in turn obligated to the peoples of Egypt and Mesopotamia. Thus the successful fusion of Roman and Teuton meant not only the preservation of much of the Roman way of life; it meant, too, the passing on of cultures founded along the Nile and beside the Tigris and the Euphrates, in the hills of Palestine and the city-states of Greece.



PART THREE

*Along the Caravan Routes*

CHAPTER 8

*Crossroads of the World*

CHAPTER 9

*Allah Akbar!*

CHAPTER 10

*The Hindu Triumph*

CHAPTER 11

*The Men of T'ang*

## ALONG THE CARAVAN ROUTES

**T**HE OUTLOOK FOR civilization in western Europe as presented in the last chapter looked none too encouraging. The culture of the classical world was now threatened with extinction by the Germanic invasions. There was, however, one dynamic and constructive force working to preserve classical culture, the Christian Church. We have noted how it came into being, how it brought a new feeling of hope and spiritual serenity to a distraught western world, how its teachings were spread through an impressive church organization headed by the papacy, and finally, how Christianity succeeded in converting some of the most important German chieftains, such as Clovis the Frank.

That conversion had momentous consequences, for it meant that in the work of building a new order in Europe the new German rulers were to cooperate with the Church. In the latter part of the eighth century, the Church and a great Frankish leader, Charlemagne, actually succeeded in working together to bring law and order, political unity, and advances in letters and thought to western Europe. The Carolingian Renaissance, as it is called, was a brilliant achievement, but it was premature. Following the death of Charlemagne, the great Frankish empire disintegrated, and a new series of invasions from the north, carried on by fierce and uncouth Vikings, again plunged Europe into disorder.

While Europe was reeling from the collapse of the Carolingian empire and the invasion of the Northmen in the ninth century, civilization was flourishing in other parts of the world. It would have indeed been a calamity if, after the collapse of classical civilization in the west, civilization had also retrogressed everywhere else. But in the history of the world, while civilization may have declined in one or more areas, it has maintained its capacity for growth in others.

The fact is well illustrated by the thriving civilization in the Near and Far East during the "Dark Ages" of Europe. The ensuing chapters will show that India was enjoying its golden age. Chandragupta II, a great ruler, established a stable government. Sculpture and poetry flourished, and striking advances were made in astronomy, mathematics, and medicine.

China during the European chaos enjoyed a golden age even more magnificent than that in India. Political unity, law, security, and a magnificent outpouring of art and thought were achieved under the T'ang Dynasty. China became the largest and most powerful state in the world, reaching west as far as Persia and the Caspian Sea and south to Burma and the Himalaya mountains.

Nearer to western Europe, in the Near East, civilization was also maintained on a high plane. When we speak of the fall of Rome, we sometimes forget that only the western portion of the Roman empire succumbed to the German invader, that in the east Constantinople carried on the classical tradition. This vigorous remnant of the Roman empire, known as the Byzantine empire, from the fifth century to the fifteenth, acted as a buffer for western Europe, staving off attacks from the Turks and other invaders, thus allowing Europe to recuperate and reorganize its strength without serious interference.

**T**HE ONLY RIVAL of Byzantine civilization outside of the Far East was that developed by the followers of Mohammed in Asia Minor and along the north African coast to Spain. The story of Mohammedanism relates the rise of a great prophet who inculcated in the hearts of the people of Arabia a vital sense of their destiny to conquer and rule the earth in the name of Allah. With unbelievable swiftness and success the followers of the Prophet swept across North Africa and surged into Spain in the west, up through Syria and Palestine, and eastward until they could one day claim suzerainty over the distant Philippines. Along their caravan routes passed the merchants of the world, converging on Bagdad with ivory from Africa, spices from India, and silks from China.

But more than trade flowed back and forth along these routes, for the Islamic world was the great preserver, adapter, and spreader of culture. The style of the numerals which number this page was brought from India by the followers of Islam and later given the title "Arabic." One of man's greatest accomplishments—the making of paper—was learned by Arabs from Chinese prisoners in Samarkand in the eighth century and transported to the western world, while the knowledge of block printing was transmitted westward by Turkish people.

Porcelain had arrived in the Near East from China by the twelfth century. New medical discoveries and drugs circulated along the caravan routes, as did the all-but-lost Greek learning with which the Moslem savants came in contact in the Near East.

We can lay aside the tribulations of western Europe as we pursue a more hopeful theme. Ahead lie some of the most vivid and illustrious pages of mankind's history—the colorful, cosmopolitan refinements of the Byzantine empire, the fervor and vitality of a sprawling Mohammedan world, and the golden ages of medieval India and China.

## THE BYZANTINE EMPIRE: 330-1453

### Beginnings of Eastern Empire

327-330 A.D.	Constantinople (Nova Roma) founded	East gains over west in trade, manufacturing
378	Visigoths kill Emperor Valens at Adrianople	
395	Roman empire divided into east and west by Theodosius	"University" founded, 425
441	Attila and Huns threaten Constantinople	
462-487	Menace of Ostrogoths	
476	Fall of Rome in west	
527-565	Reign of Justinian Eastern empire stages a comeback	Codification of Roman Law, 528-534 <i>Corpus Juris Civilis</i> ( <i>Digest, Institutes, Novels</i> )
533-534	Belisarius conquers northern India	
535-554	Justinian reconquers Italy from Ostrogoths	Cathedral of St. Sophia opened, 537 Pendentive theory Mosaic art

### 7th century Eastern Empire Becomes Byzantine

565-c. 700	Dark years for eastern empire	Hellenization; blending of races: Croats, Serbs, Bulgars with Greeks; Greek replaces Latin as official language
717-741	Leo III one of greatest Byzantine emperors (Battle of Tours, 732)	Extensive internal reform
725-843	Iconoclastic controversy	
9th, 10th centuries	Byzantine empire on defensive Wars with Bulgars, Moslems	Eastern Church converts Slav world, 9th century Russian Church springs from Eastern Church University reopened, 863
11th century	Seljuk Turks threaten Constantinople	
1054	Final break between Roman and Byzantine churches	Psellus, greatest Byzantine scholar Byzantine scholarship flourishes, 9th-12th centuries
12th century	Crusades attempt to beat back Moslem Turks	

### Decline of Byzantine Empire

1204	Crusaders and Venetians plunder Constantinople	Social and religious disputes Financial and military disorder
1204-1261	Venetians found empire	Lower classes revolt
14th century	Empire definitely on downgrade	
1453	Ottoman Turks capture Constantinople: collapse of the Byzantine empire	

## CHAPTER 8

# *Crossroads of the World*



ON May 11, 330 A.D., the emperor Constantine formally dedicated his magnificent new eastern capital of the Roman empire. He named it Nova Roma, but it soon became known as Constantinople. And on May 29, 1453, another emperor, the last of the scores of rulers who had governed the great capital for 1123 years, met his death in battle as the victorious Turks put an end to an empire that had stood as the successor of Roman sovereignty and Greek culture. This is at once a dramatic and tragic story, the story of a civilization that stood as an isolated outpost of Europe, facing a hostile and barbarous east and protecting an unappreciative west that was itself slowly arising out of barbarism.

During the thousand years that it survived the western empire, there were occasions when the eastern empire came perilously near collapsing, but these periods were followed invariably by splendid revivals in power and civilization. The empire had its weaknesses—revolts and intrigues, overemphasis upon circuses and upon theological disputes, and customs which were quite often barbarous and cruel. But on the other hand, it made some magnificent contributions which more than compensate for its negative characteristics. It preserved the Greek language and learning; it perpetuated the Roman imperial system and codified Roman law; it introduced into Europe many of the finest features of Mohammedan culture through the contacts which it made with the east. It fused Greek and oriental art and dedicated the new artistic creations to the glorification of the Christian religion. Again, because of its splendid situation at the crossroads of the east and west, the empire of Constantinople could act as the great culture disseminator for all peoples who came in contact with it. And its contacts



were many, owing chiefly to the far-reaching trade which it so successfully carried on in the Mediterranean and Black Sea areas and the entire Near East.

For over a thousand years the eastern empire, with its center at Constantinople, was the most splendid civilization the Middle Ages knew. Its wealth excited the envy and greed of all other peoples, especially the Turks in the east and Italians in the west, and made inevitable the destruction of the empire when its military and naval power became sufficiently weakened. But during the height of its power the greatness of Constantinople was known throughout the world. That rich and turbulent metropolis was to the early Middle Ages what Athens was to Greece, and Rome to the Mediterranean world. Well has it been called "The City," for it was known and envied in three continents.

### *The History of the Eastern Empire*

**The beginning of the eastern empire.** On the peninsula that juts out from Europe to Asia, on the magnificent harbor of the Golden Horn stood the ancient Greek city of Byzantium. On this site in 327 A.D. Constantine began the building of a new capital for the Roman empire. His purpose was not illogical, for the empire had lately been undergoing definite changes. Oriental cults were spreading throughout the west, replacing the old Roman faith in popularity. From Egypt had come the worship of Isis and Osiris, from Asia Minor the Magna Mater cult, while the Roman soldiers had taken to the worship of Mithras, the Persian god of light. The Goths were periling the empire on the Danube, and the Persians were a menace in Asia; Rome's location in the west made effective resistance more difficult. Again, while Italy was declin-

ing economically, the east was becoming more and more important in trade and manufacturing.

Lastly, significant changes had taken place in the nature of Roman monarchy. Gone were the days when the princeps of the early empire mixed freely with his subjects. The empire had been turning more and more toward the east. Diocletian and his successors borrowed from the brilliant Sassanid court in Persia its oriental conceptions of divine sovereignty, wherein the subject must prostrate himself before the heaven-appointed emperor, who surrounded himself with lavish rituals, costumes, and ceremonials. These various changes made logical a shift of capitals. The new city, Nova Roma, or Constantinople, was dedicated in 330 and soon became the most spectacular in Christendom.





Theoretically Rome and New Rome were the double capitals of a unified empire, but in the year 395 Theodosius divided the empire between his two sons, one to rule over the east, the other over the west. From this time on, there was a definite separation between the two sections, and we can now talk about "a Roman empire of the east." It is true that the fiction of imperial unity continued for years afterward, and Justinian's splendid though brief conquests in the west actually made the entire Mediterranean once more a Roman sphere. But his project of political reunification was a lost cause, and after his death the west declined completely, while the eastern empire endured for almost a thousand years. Thus the eastern Roman empire with its original Roman traditions was transformed by geography, time, and circumstances into a civilization that was unique. It was the fusion of Roman, Greek, and oriental elements.

**Gothic invasions.** From the outset the eastern empire was beset with dangers. In 378 the Emperor Valens was killed at the battle of Adrianople while unsuccessfully attempting to hurl back the Visigoths. The latter were all-powerful; then their leader, Alaric, led them west into Italy in search of fresh lands and booty. With the Visigoths gone, the empire was safe for a time. In 441 Attila and his hordes of Huns crossed the Danube and threatened Constantinople; but he, too, turned to the west in search of new conquests. Then came the Ostrogoths, who forced the eastern emperors to allot them lands in 462, pillaged Mace-

donia, and threatened Constantinople in 487. But Theodoric the Ostrogoth was also tempted to win Italy, and New Rome was once more saved. Thus New Rome emerged more independent and intact than ancient Rome at this time, and New Rome naturally turned to the east for its culture and livelihood.

**Justinian.** The sixth century is marked by the reign of the famous emperor Justinian (527-565). His ambition was to restore the Roman empire to its ancient grandeur and at the same time to place the power of Constantinople, as the true heir of Rome, over the now barbarized lands of the west. Justinian owed much of his success to his beautiful and gifted wife, the empress Theodora, and to his brilliant general Belisarius. His military policies were defensive in the east and offensive in the west. He bought off the Persians, who had been threatening in the Near East, and devoted his attention to conquering the west. In 533-534 Belisarius destroyed the Vandal nation and took over northern Africa. From 535 to 548 the doughty general tried to reconquer Italy from the Ostrogoths. However, it remained for another excellent Byzantine general, Narses, to accomplish this difficult assignment about 554 A.D.

In the meantime, Justinian's forces gained the southeastern portion of Spain from the Visigoths, and incorporated it with neighboring islands into the empire (see the map above). But Justinian's empire was only half the Roman empire at its height. He possessed but little of Spain and nothing of Gaul, Britain,

or Germany. Furthermore, the reconquest had been accomplished only by exhausting the empire, both militarily and financially.

Justinian's reign was remarkable for its domestic advances. Such scholars as the historian Procopius continued the Greek literary tradition. The imperial administration was reorganized, while that great monument to legal scholarship and Justinian's far-sightedness, the codification of Roman law, was completed under the emperor's orders. Art was stimulated by the patronage given to sculptors and workers in mosaics, and the greatest of all Byzantine architectural triumphs, the cathedral of St. Sophia, was raised to the glory of God and the everlasting fame of Justinian.

**Dark years.** The hundred fifty years following the death of Justinian were dark indeed for the eastern empire. In 568 the Lombards established a new kingdom in Italy, so that the emperor now controlled only the southern tip of the peninsula and the territory around Ravenna. Fierce Slavic tribes invaded the Balkan region, among them the Avars, who failed to capture Constantinople (626) and later migrated to Italy. The emperor Heraclius (610-641), after a bitter struggle, managed to hold back the growing incursions of the Persians into the empire, but a new and more terrible danger now arose. The early part of the seventh century saw the birth of Islam, the union of the tribes of Arabia under a new and warlike religious faith, Mohammedanism, about which we shall read in the next chapter. Inspired by a fanatical zeal to conquer in the

name of their Prophet, the Mohammedans by the end of the seventh century had taken over north Africa and Syria and even parts of Asia Minor. The eastern empire stood on the brink of disintegration, especially since the Balkan region was now in the hands of the Bulgars (a semi-oriental people) and various Slav peoples. The power of the emperor extended no farther than Constantinople and its environs, and a fringe of ports in the eastern Mediterranean. Elsewhere their hold was precarious indeed.

**The empire becomes "Byzantine."** In the seventh century the eastern Roman empire was transformed into the "Byzantine" empire. The name comes from the Greek settlement of Byzantium, on the site of which Nova Roma was built. When, as we are to see immediately, the eastern Roman empire was transformed into a Hellenized civilization, an appropriate title for it was the Greek name for its capital.

First of all, a merging of peoples took place. Croats, Serbs, and Bulgars penetrated the empire and mingled with the Greek peoples. The blending of races helped rejuvenate the empire by the infusion of new blood. Even more important, the Byzantine empire became Hellenized. In the seventh century Greek replaced Latin as the official language. The governmental edicts were drawn up in that tongue, Greek titles instead of Latin were bestowed on administrative officers, and Greek was used in giving commands in the army, besides remaining the language of the Church in the east. Until 1453 the Byzantine empire called itself the empire of the Romans, but



this was a fiction, for it was now in reality a separate, independent, Hellenized monarchy having its center at Constantinople and possessing a decidedly oriental outlook.

**Leo III.** The eighth century opened unhappily for the Byzantines, but the rule of Leo III (717-741) brought order back to the hard-pressed monarchy. Leo defeated the Mohammedans on the sea in several engagements and repulsed them in their siege of Constantinople in 717-718. This event occurred some fifteen years before Charles Martel won over their forces in the battle of Tours in 732 (see page 207), and it clearly shows how determined was the Mohammedan attack on Christendom in the eighth century. Leo's internal reforms were extensive. He reformed the criminal and civil law and reorganized the administration of the empire by dividing huge areas into smaller districts that could be governed more efficiently. He prevented the growth of huge estates at the expense of the peasantry, promulgated a nautical code which encouraged the development of a merchant marine, and attacked monastic abuses and the worship of images in the eastern Church. This started a quarrel known as the iconoclastic controversy, which later brought about a schism between the eastern and Roman churches.

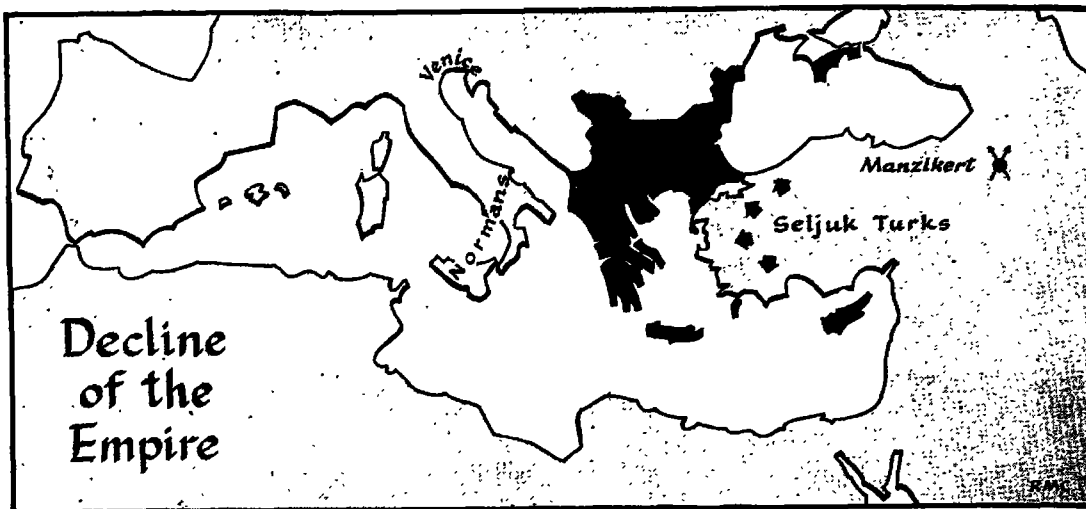
**Ninth- and tenth-century disorders.** But the death of Leo III ushered in more decades of disorder and dangers. In the ninth and tenth centuries the Byzantine empire rode out the storm of external attack because of its strong naval position. The Mohammedans were defeated in the Aegean, and by capable armies the Byzantines held back the powerful Bulgarians who aimed at possessing all the Balkans. Under the dynamic leadership of Basil II (976-1025), the Byzantine forces finally crushed their foes with great severity. On one occasion 15,000 Bulgars were blinded and only 150 were left a single eye each to guide the rest home. This cruel treatment of the Bulgars caused Basil II to be known thereafter as *Bulgaroctonos*—"slayer of the Bulgars." Basil II fought the Mohammedans also but was only intermittently successful against them and gained no important territories. Thus Syria, Palestine, Egypt, and lands to the west, over which Justinian had once ruled, remained in Moslem hands during Basil's reign.

Basil II brought strength and prosperity to his empire. After restoring Byzantine control

over the Balkan peninsula and southern Italy, the *Basileus* (for such was the Greek title of the emperor) tried to placate his new subjects by allowing them to retain their own governments. He was friendly, too, with the powerful prince of Kiev in southern Russia and was instrumental in bringing about that ruler's conversion in 989. Henceforth Russians around Kiev adopted Christianity and began to accept some Byzantine customs and learning. Basil II fostered commerce and industry and died leaving a large surplus in the imperial treasury. Unfortunately, a decline in Byzantine resources and initiative took place afterward.

**Eleventh-century decay.** Internally the emperors had to contend with an aggressive aristocracy which was gaining too much power in the provinces, and with a Church that was constantly absorbing lands for monastic purposes. Land so held no longer paid taxes to the state. But the external danger was even more pressing. Venice became stronger in the west and took over control of the Adriatic region. In the east there appeared the formidable and barbarous Seljuk Turks, whose Mohammedan fanaticism incited them to make continuous attacks on the weakening empire. In the eleventh century these invaders captured Jerusalem and even gained the shore opposite Constantinople in 1079. The Byzantine empire suffered a terrible blow in this victorious campaign of the Seljuk Turks. Defeated at the battle of Manzikert (1071), it lost the eastern portions of Asia Minor to the Turks (see map, page 220). These rich territories the empire never regained.

Another great threat to Byzantine power was the pressure of the Normans in Italy. During the eleventh century under Robert Guiscard, Norman adventurers began to carve out possessions for themselves in southern Italy at the expense of the Byzantine empire. By 1080 Byzantine power on the mainland and in Sicily was smashed and its prestige in the west seriously weakened. But then, when the empire was torn by anarchy and apparently completely exhausted, its most able general, Alexius Comnenus, gained the throne by a *coup d'etat* in 1081. He restored order and imperial prestige, and he and his successors kept the Turks in check for almost 125 years. Serbia and Bulgaria came under Byzantine control in the twelfth century, and the empire waxed wealthy in trade.



**Italian control.** The most serious blow fell in 1204. Up to that year the emperors had succeeded in preventing the Turks from capturing Constantinople. Since the eleventh century the western world had been engaged intermittently in great conflicts with the Moslem world over possession of the Holy Land. These campaigns, known as crusades, had been of value to the Byzantine emperors in helping stave off the onrush of the Moslems. But the Fourth Crusade furnished a pretext for semibarbarous crusaders and rapacious Venetian merchants to sack the great capital and found an empire which endured until 1261 and contained a multitude of feudal lordships on the western pattern. Thus the Byzantine commercial wealth fell to the Venetians and the empire was ruined economically. The catastrophe of 1204 proved a mortal wound to the Byzantine empire, even though the empire kept a semblance of its former might for another two centuries.

**Reasons for Byzantine decline.** After 1261 various Greek emperors succeeded in regaining control, but their rule was of short duration. They tried to curb Venetian power by making trading treaties with Genoa, but their action only confused matters and filled the eastern Mediterranean with more Italian fleets and colonies. The Byzantine empire was on the downgrade all through the fourteenth century. One authority cites three important internal and three external causes for this decadence. The empire was disturbed internally by civil wars in which conflicting factions

weakened the empire and gave enemies opportunities to come in; by social and religious disputes during which the lower classes revolted and the eastern clergy quarreled bitterly with the Latin Church; by financial and military disorder through which taxes and customs duties diminished, coinage was debased, and the military and naval forces grew too weak to protect the empire. On the outside, Serbs and Bulgarians weakened the empire by prolonged warfare; a new group of Turks, the Ottomans, were growing in power and finally captured even Constantinople itself in 1453; the Latins, especially the Venetians and Genoese, did not help the Byzantine empire in its hour of need but made the most of every opportunity to take advantage of its distress and hasten its end for their own interests.<sup>1</sup>

The destruction of the Byzantine empire was now only a matter of time; the end came in 1453. After a magnificent defense in which the emperor Constantine XIII had to confront the Turkish army of nearly 160,000 soldiers with only 9000 men (half of whom were foreigners), the great eastern bulwark of Christian civilization crumbled before the might of Islam, and the thousand-year-old Byzantine empire fell forever.

**Reasons for endurance of Byzantine empire.** We can see from the preceding résumé of Byzantine political developments that the empire suffered from endless internal and external attacks. Yet despite the outbreak of some sixty-five revolutions in a little over a thousand years and the abdication or murder of more

than sixty emperors, the empire endured as a definite political entity for a long period. What enabled it to surmount these difficulties? One reason lies in the continuous use of a money economy, in contrast to the primitive economy then characteristic in the west. This money system facilitated trade and the payment of taxes and enabled the empire to provide military and naval forces more easily in times of stress. Another reason for the prolonged existence of the state lies in its political system. Where the west was broken up into innumerable feudal groups and thus had no single institution which centralized power, the opposite situation existed in the east. Here there was an absolute monarchy surrounded by a well-trained and centralized bureaucracy. The control of the emperor was absolute. Only a successful revolution could depose him, and, because he was consecrated with holy oil by the patriarch and hence was a priest-king who claimed the divine right to rule, he had complete power in civil, religious, and military affairs.

History is replete with examples of the absolute jurisdiction achieved by rulers who united in themselves both political and religious offices. We will recall the power of the Egyptian pharaoh, at once a priest and ruler. Likewise the emperor of China was both a monarch and the officiator of the sacred rites of heaven and earth. He was supposed to rule by the mandate of heaven. The worship of the Roman emperor was an attempt to gain the loyalty of all subjects by the deification of the ruler. Later on we shall see how exalted a position the ruler of the Incas held as a priest-king, while in seventeenth-century Europe such monarchs as James I of England and Louis XIV of France justified their despotism by maintaining they had divine right to rule their subjects as they pleased.

The emperor of Byzantium was another such ruler. He stood at the top of an intricate official hierarchy and bureaucracy, a dazzling manifestation of a government which held the entire empire firmly in its grasp. However, while the emperor was able to act as autocratically as he desired, he was dependent upon a well-trained civil service for administration, and this group served to check somewhat the absolutism of the ruler. The most important civil servant was the master of offices. This post had been created by the Roman emperors by the fourth century A.D. and endured into Byzantine times. Duties devolving upon the master of offices varied from time to time, and there was eventually more than one master.

The prestige attached to the position of master of offices was greater than that of any other save that of the emperor, for the master of offices was in charge of foreign affairs, the royal correspondence, court ceremonial, and the introduction of embassies from abroad. Financial affairs were handled by various officials, of whom the most important was the count of the sacred largesses. The chief police official in Constantinople was known as the city prefect.

By the beginning of the eighth century the empire had been divided into seven or eight *themes*. This word at one time signified an army corps, and later came to mean the territory which the corps occupied. The head of each *theme* was known as the *strategis*, or military commander. The *strategis* was not only commander of affairs relating to warfare and the army but came to control all civil administration as well. This system was brought to completion in the eighth century (when each *theme* had its particular army corps), and as such it continued to exist while the empire itself endured.

### *Religious and Social Life*

**I**conoclasm and the break with Rome. Justinian attempted without success to hold the Church together as one body throughout the Roman empire. The churchmen at Constantinople and Rome constantly quarreled over ecclesiastical problems, and in 1054 there was a final separation, so that to this day, despite many attempts at reunification, the Roman Catholics and the Greek Catholics

have been distinct and independent of one another. The Roman Church became a great international body with jurisdiction throughout western Europe. The eastern, or Orthodox, Church became a great state church whose interests were interfused with those of the empire.

The bishop of Constantinople came in time to occupy much the same administrative position as the bishop of Rome. He became the



patriarch of Constantinople with jurisdiction over twenty-eight provinces, just as the bishop of Rome became, as Pope, the head of western Christendom. The patriarch was chosen by the emperor, who made his appointment from a list of three candidates drawn up by an ecclesiastical council of archbishops. If the monarch so wished, he appointed a patriarch of his choice. Naturally, the policies of empire and Church were inseparably linked in Byzantine times.

Unhappy relations between the eastern and western churches were of long standing: The strong Leo III (717-740) instituted many reforms in the Byzantine empire, after having defeated the Moslems. While Leo had no use for Mohammedanism, he seems to have agreed with its contention that the use of images and pictures in worship led eventually to idolatry. In 725, therefore, Leo issued his famous edict forbidding image-worship as superstitious and irreverent, and he ordered the whitewashing of the pictures of the saints upon church walls as well as the removal of all statues. At once rioting broke out in Constantinople, and the officials who were taking down the large figure of "Christ Crucified" from the main palace gate were cudgelled to death by a fanatical mob. The demonstration was put down by troops, who killed some of the rioters. Leo then had a plain cross put above the palace gate and explained that symbols of the Christian faith were to be substituted for pictures and statues.

The patriarch of Constantinople objected to Leo's course of action. He was replaced by another man more agreeable to the emperor's will. Riots broke out in Greece and Italy,

while the Pope at Rome, Gregory II, protested vehemently, and the succeeding Pope called a council of ninety-three bishops who read out of the Church all those who had accepted the program of iconoclasm (image-breaking). In 843 the schism was temporarily healed by the restoration of images in the eastern Church, but other sources of friction made any permanent reunion impossible. The Latins were accused by some of the eastern ecclesiastics of acting irregularly by eating eggs in Lent, making use of unleavened bread in the Mass, and permitting priests to shave their faces. The rivalry between Latin and Greek churchmen over the conversion of the Slavic peoples in eastern Europe proved to be still another source of irritation and complaint. Finally, in 1054 the breaking point was reached, and henceforth the papacy in the west and the Orthodox Church in the east maintained separate existences, filled with mutual suspicion and intolerance.

**Importance of the eastern Church.** The Orthodox Church played an important role in the daily life of the people. Linked as it was to the state, it received automatically the loyalty of the people, and it gratified their love of pomp and pageantry by the splendor of its ritual and services. Undoubtedly there was a great deal of superstition of a gross kind among the Byzantines, centered around magic, witchcraft, fortune-telling, charms, and various secret ceremonies, some of them obscene, which the Church did little to prevent. On the other hand, the Church was the center of keen theological speculation, and it stimulated the arts profoundly.

The Orthodox Church converted the Slav world. About 863 A.D. the brothers Cyril and Methodius set out from Constantinople for Hungary and Bohemia to bring these people the gospel. They devised an alphabet of modified Greek characters in which to write the Slavic language; then they translated portions of the Bible and the divine service. Although the peoples of this region eventually came under Roman jurisdiction, the work of the two brothers (afterward made saints) triumphed to the east and south, so that ultimately the Greek Orthodox Church extended from Constantinople to the Baltic Sea (see map above). From the Byzantine Church also sprang the Russian Church, whose dogma, worship, and discipline were molded on the pattern of the

former. With the extension of the Greek Church went an extension of Byzantine culture, so that today the semi-Greek alphabet of the Russians is a modification of Cyril's invention, while Greek art, commerce, and intellectual life have permeated most of the Slav world. The literature of the Slavs has been conditioned by Byzantine models. From the empire went architects and painters to build and ornament churches and public edifices, such as existed in Russia's old capital, Kiev, until recently. From Constantinople came both the proper style of dress and the correct ritual for court life in the Slavic kingdoms. Russia, Rumania, Bulgaria, Yugo-Slavia were all made the richer for Byzantine culture diffusion.<sup>2</sup>

**Social life.** Social life in the empire was colorful. The center of the empire was Constantinople, and the center of Constantinople consisted of the royal palace, the cathedral of St. Sophia, and the giant Hippodrome. The palace had groves of trees, gardens, banqueting halls, fountains, school, barracks, and stables filled with costly race horses. When the emperor sat down to dine, he ate from gold plate. One banqueting hall had doors of silver and tables of gold and silver and rich enamel, while the floors were strewn with roses, rosemary, and myrtle. So magnificent was the imperial palace that visitors from the drab and poverty-stricken west were awestruck at the wealth which they saw so lavishly displayed on all sides, and prostrated themselves at the feet of the semi-divine emperor.<sup>3</sup> Constantinople was the largest and wealthiest city in the Middle Ages. The most notable characteristic of the capital was its urbanity. Constantinople's trade, crafts, and industries made it the hub of the empire, and it could not help becoming the intellectual and social capital.

Byzantine social life was marked by tremendous contrasts. The religious attitude was deeply ingrained in the popular mind. Asceticism and monasticism were widespread throughout the empire, and to an extraordinary degree even the most commonplace individual seemed to take a vital interest in the deepest theological discussions, while all the people were much affected by a religious mysticism in their daily lives. But in contrast, the same people were exceptionally fond of all types of amusements. The great Hippodrome, seating 80,000 wide-eyed spectators, was the scene of hotly disputed chariot races which

split the entire populace into rival factions of "Blue" and "Green." One authority has graphically pictured for us the color and importance of these Hippodrome races.

"Every reader will picture the scene for himself: the serried ranks of Greens and Blues in their thousands, the patricians and senators in their gorgeous robes of silk and flashing jewels seated on the terrace reserved for them; high above the course, connected with the palace and cut off from the Circus itself, the boxes of Empress and Emperor. The long suspense; then the arrival of the imperial guard; a movement: the Emperor enters his box; he raises his mantle, and makes the sign of the Cross. The choirs sing, and strangely mingled with praises to the Christ and the Virgin pour the passionate supplications for the victory of this or that charioteer. Then the cars burst away: Triumph! Defeat!—and later under cover of night in the dark passageway of the narrow street a knife gleams for an instant, and a body falls; a splash in the sea and the current sweeps something away. A 'Green' has had his revenge on a victorious 'Blue.'"<sup>4</sup>

**Byzantine women.** Women played an important part in Byzantine society. The empresses Theodora and Irene and many other prominent women exercised great influence. Byzantine women had a more equitable status than women anywhere else in Europe.

Many contradictory and libelous statements have been made about the Empress Theodora, wife of Justinian, but even the meager facts on which we can rely mark her out as an interesting and dynamic historical figure. While Justinian was yet only the heir to the throne,



*A sixth-century Byzantine mosaic pictures the Empress Theodora with two of her attendants.*



he announced to the world that he intended to marry this woman. Court society was shocked, for Theodora was a dancer on the comic stage and was reputed to be the daughter of an animal trainer at the circus. But in all the years which she was married to the great lawgiver, Theodora never caused a breath of scandal to be raised about her conduct. Of brilliant mind and poise, the empress gave invaluable help to her husband, counseling him wisely.

The climax of her career came in the famous Nika Revolt of 532. We have noticed the rivalry that existed between the Green and Blue factions at the Hippodrome. These antagonistic groups differed on religious and political grounds as well, and in 532 much rioting occurred. Justinian ordered the leaders of both factions to be executed. But two of the ringleaders escaped, one a Blue and the other a Green. They united their respective followers into one rebellious throng, and six days of desperate rioting ensued. Finally the mob shouted for the deposition of Justinian himself. It happened that the main portion of the emperor's army was away fighting the Persians, and his ministers counseled Justinian to flee by sea. He was about to follow their advice when Theodora spoke up before the council with these words, which Procopius (the chronicler of Justinian's court) has preserved for us:

"May I never be separated from this purple, and may I not live that day on which those who meet me shall not address me as mistress. If, now, it is your wish to save yourself, O Emperor, there is no difficulty. For we have much money, and there is the sea, here the boats . . . as for myself, I approve a certain ancient saying that royalty is a good burial-shroud."<sup>5</sup>

Justinian and his ministers took heart at this brave declaration, a final assault routed the mob, and the emperor kept his throne, thanks to his low-born but high-spirited wife.

**Slavery.** Slavery was a characteristic feature of Byzantine life. That slavery had nearly always existed among the ancient peoples, we can realize by thinking back upon the civilizations we have already studied. Even enlightened Athens had her full share of slaves. Christianity had much to do with lightening the burden of this wretched class of human beings by teaching that every man was equally endowed with a divine soul. By the time of Justinian's reign public opinion was condemning the worst features of ancient slavery. Justinian's legislation allowed slaves and free persons to intermarry and stipulated that the children of such unions would be free. Furthermore, he made it a criminal offense for a master to make a prostitute of a slave. Hereditary slavery diminished, although the arrival of heathen captives prolonged it unduly in the Byzantine empire.

**Byzantine lack of balance.** The Byzantines possessed both a love of beauty and a streak of cruelty and viciousness. Their sports were often bloody and sadistic, their tortures were horrible, and the lives of their aristocracy were a mixture of luxury, intrigue, and studied vice. Some historians have described Byzantine immorality with grim joy. While they have exaggerated this aspect of Byzantine life, it is true that the Byzantines were promiscuous.

Where the Greek ideal had been one of moderation in conduct, the Byzantines never achieved that balance. They tended toward excess in almost everything they did, a phenomenon that may be partly explained by their political situation. The empire was never free from the fear of invasion, and its inhabitants were constantly aware of their imminent danger. Because Byzantine civilization was a fusion of the oriental and Greek, perhaps we can ascribe to the former the Byzantine love of splendor and indulgence and to the latter its keen appreciation of intellect and art.<sup>6</sup>

### *Industry, Commerce, and Wealth*

**Industry.** The splendor of Byzantine civilization was derived from wealth amassed from its extensive industry and commerce. Constantinople's geographical situation made it the crossroads of the east and west (see map, page 328), which helps explain why it was the wealthiest Christian city of the Middle

Ages. But Constantinople was not merely a trading center. It was the home of a teeming industrial life which supplied Christendom with innumerable products. Other industrial centers besides Constantinople existed throughout the empire and added to its prosperity: Antioch, Damascus, and Salonika, to



*The near-divine status of Justinian is apparent in this mosaic which represents the haloed emperor flanked on the right by men of the Church—a church official bears the cross—and on the left by courtiers and a bodyguard of his soldiers. Note the elegance and richness of the costumes, the decorated parchment, and the censer.*

mention but a few. But when we talk of Byzantine commerce and industry, we can think of its center as the huge metropolis-capital of about a million inhabitants.

To this city of wealth and activity, once-proud Rome was a contrast indeed. Rome by this time had declined to only a shadow of its imperial glory, and its chief claim to fame now lay in being the home of the Pope.

Constantinople specialized in luxury goods. Metalwork flourished with the manufacture of armor, weapons, hardware, and bronze pieces. The goldsmith became a popular and expert craftsman, owing to the ecclesiastical demand for altars, crosses, censers, and gold reliquaries. Gold caskets and cups were beautifully decorated by jewelers. Religious needs also encouraged a large wax and tallow candle industry. Tapestries and hangings of unexcelled workmanship found a ready market outside the empire. Filigreed and enameled glasswork, porcelain, and mosaics were prized wherever they were exported. Perfumes, manuscripts, carpets, leather goods, and a variety of

jeweled, engraved, and enameled ornaments were likewise a part of the highly profitable luxury trade in Constantinople.<sup>7</sup>

It was the textile industry, however, upon which the fame of Byzantine industry chiefly rested. Until the time of Justinian all raw silk necessary for the manufacture of precious fabrics had to be imported from China by way of the Persian Gulf. Then about 550, according to the story, Nestorian missionaries, a group of heretics who had fled from Europe, smuggled silkworms out of the Middle Flowery Kingdom and brought them to the eastern empire. It was not long before the silk industry was flourishing around Constantinople, and it soon became the most fostered industry in the empire, and, in fact, a state monopoly. Silken stuffs of purple, violet, yellow, and green, embroidered with gold and silver thread and fashioned into costly vestments for church services or regal court attire, were eagerly sought after all over Europe.

**Government regulation.** The Byzantine government exerted a strict control over all manu-

facturing and trading. Private ownership was subjected to governmental regulation regarding wages, prices, and labor conditions. At Constantinople the trades and professions were in the charge of hereditary guilds, which resembled in some aspects the *collegia* of the Roman republic. The nature of governmental control over the trade guilds has been described in the tenth-century *Book of the Prefect*. Capital could not ruthlessly exploit labor, but the craftsmen had to continue working in their guilds. Prices for the buying of raw materials and the selling of foods were alike fixed by governmental decree. The state also designated when and where goods made by guilds were to be sold, and punished violators severely. Thus the government kept a close watch over industry.<sup>8</sup>

The empire regulated its economic life in much the same fashion as modern totalitarian states. Commerce and even agriculture, which, unlike the situation in the west, seems to have been of less economic importance than industry, had governmental regulation in some respects. Many great estates were supervised by the state and cultivated by coloni and serfs. But large private estates still existed, run in much the same way as the manorial system in the west, which will be treated in Chapter 12. The land tax was an important aspect of Byzantine finance, and so heavy did taxation become that poor farmers tended to transfer their parcels of land to large landowners. As a result, serfdom increased throughout the empire and thereby created a problem reminiscent of the agricultural difficulties of Rome.

**Commerce and wealth.** Commerce gave the empire its chief source of wealth. At the crossroads of the east and west and protected by a powerful navy that combed the sea-routes for pirates and Moslem enemies, Byzantium grew wealthy from its export and import trade. As time elapsed, however, foreigners began to monopolize the business, so that the shrewd merchants of Venice and other states received a lion's share of the profits.

Constantinople had two main types of exports: the products manufactured within the empire itself, such as textiles, metal, leather, and luxury goods; and the products which came from the east and were re-exported from the empire's trading centers, such as spices, drugs, aromatics, and precious stones. Two-

way commerce was carried on in the following manner: Constantinople exported to Russia its luxury goods, wines, spices, and silks, and imported furs, fish, caviar, beeswax, honey, and amber. To the east went the products manufactured in the empire, while back to Constantinople came those precious spices, jewels, costly woods, and essences which made the orient a synonym for fabulous luxury among the peoples of western Europe.<sup>9</sup>

We can catch a vivid picture of the wealth and bustle of Constantinople from the pen of a twelfth-century traveler, Benjamin of Tudela: "From every part of the Empire of Greece tribute is brought here every year, and strongholds are filled with garments of silk, purple, and gold. Like unto these storehouses and this wealth, there is nothing in the whole world to be found. It is said that the tribute of the city amounts every year to 20,000 gold pieces, derived both from the rents of shops and markets, and from the tribute of merchants who enter by sea or land. The Greek inhabitants are very rich in gold and precious stones, and they go clothed in garments of silk with gold embroidery, and they ride horses, and look like princes. Indeed, the land is very rich in all cloth stuffs, and in bread, meat, and wine. Wealth like that of Constantinople is not to be found in the whole world. Here also are men learned in all the books of the Greeks, and they eat and drink every man under his vine and his fig tree."<sup>10</sup>

This keen-eyed traveler also informs us that the streets are filled with merchants from Babylon, Mesopotamia, Persia, Egypt, Russia, Hungary, Italy, Spain, and elsewhere. The merchants come by sea and land, and "there is none like it in the world except Bagdad, the great city of Islam."

Another Mohammedan traveler visited the metropolis about the same time and reported, "Constantinople is a city larger than its renown proclaims. May God, in His grace and generosity, deign to make of it the capital of Islam!"<sup>11</sup>

But one writer has reason to complain of the strange mixture of races that congregated daily in the trading center: "The men are very thievish who dwell in the capital of Constantinople; they belong neither to one language nor to one people; there are minglings of

strange tongues and there are very thievish men, Cretans and Turks, Alans, Rhodians and Chians . . . all of them being very thievish and corrupt are considered as saints in Constantinople."<sup>12</sup>

The wealth of the Byzantine empire was enormous. Its currency, the gold bezant, could be found throughout the entire Mediterranean basin and was the standard money of

the area. The Byzantines with pardonable exaggeration maintained that three quarters of the world's wealth lay within their city's confines. Little wonder, then, that the eyes of the rest of the world were turned with greedy anticipation on an empire whose disintegration finally became obvious to all. Crusader and Moslem alike acted upon the old adage—"to the victor belong the spoils."

### *Cultural Contributions*

**T**he *preservation of Greek tradition.* As we have seen already, the eastern empire had been founded with Latin as the official language of both state and Church. But from the time of Justinian onward, the language of everyday life, Greek, became also the language of scholarship, government, and the ecclesiastics. The official adoption of Greek (which had been spoken in the region since Hellenic times) in Justinian's reign was a blessing for later generations, since it meant the preservation of the Greek classics in philosophy, literature, and science.

**Scholarship.** The scholars who perpetuated the Greek tradition were not ecclesiastics as in the west but rather members of that educated governmental bureaucracy, or civil service, which we have mentioned previously. The reopening of the principal school of higher learning in Constantinople in 863 enlarged the intellectual horizon of the empire. There "eminent teachers, under the solicitous patronage of the sovereign, taught philosophy, rhetoric, and the sciences; and around their chairs students crowded, coming from all points of the Byzantine and Arabian Orient."<sup>13</sup>

This school appears to have been founded as early as 425 A.D. by Theodosius II, but its life was a most uncertain one in succeeding centuries because of foreign wars and civil struggles. Furthermore, like other institutions of the empire, it was dependent upon the initiative of the emperor. At various times it became inactive and was then revived by a new ruler. In 1045 the institution was organized with two faculties, Law and Philosophy.

The most famous teacher of philosophy was Michael Psellus (1018-1079). Psellus has left us some addresses which he gave to his students. He pleaded for a more active pursuit of learning, "for you do not rouse your souls,

neither do you devour the fire of my zeal, but you lay hold of knowledge as though you were one of those in the market place." He would then contrast his laggard students with the ancient Greeks, maintaining that the latter never had to be goaded into seeking knowledge. Psellus was undoubtedly the greatest of Byzantine scholars. His mind was inquisitive and all-embracing, while his love of philosophy, especially Platonic, did much to encourage the study of that subject.

Byzantine scholarship flourished particularly between the ninth and twelfth centuries. It was concerned almost entirely with recovering and classifying Hellenic and Hellenistic learning. Greek medicine was preserved and added to by such eminent Byzantine physicians as Aëtius, the court doctor of Justinian, and others. The contributions of the Greeks in mathematics, biology, and physical sciences were likewise recovered in large measure by Byzantine scholars, and from them in turn the Moslem scientists derived much of their knowledge. The discussion of Greek philosophy and literature created that interest in classical culture which was to be known centuries later in Italy as Humanism.

Byzantine scholarship had one great weakness—it was not creative but imitative. Scholars were dazzled by the glories of Hellenic and Hellenistic thought, and they spent their lives in compiling, classifying, and discussing the classics. They were great encyclopedists, and for their persevering labors we are grateful, but their own contributions lack vitality because they are simply a rehash of the works of ancient scholars. Byzantine education was the privilege of only a few wealthy people, and this fact in part accounts for the lifelessness and narrow sophistication surrounding the scholarship of the empire.

**Justinian's law code.** One of the most important contributions of Byzantine scholarship was written partly in Latin, partly in Greek. It was the famous codification of Roman civil law under the orders of Justinian, which was discussed in Chapter 6. In 528 Justinian convoked a commission to gather and classify the imperial constitutions promulgated since Hadrian's time. This was the Justinian Code, published first in 529 and reissued in 534. In 533 appeared the *Digest*, or *Pandects*, dealing with the writings of the earlier great jurists, which reduced some three million lines of legal literature to one hundred fifty thousand. The *Institutes* was published for the

benefit of students, and summarized in a single manual the principles of the Code. Lastly, the *Novels*, or laws promulgated by Justinian between 534 and 565, were appended to the famous *Corpus Juris Civilis* (the Code, the *Digest*, and the *Institutes*).

The Code and commentaries were edited in haste, and they contain some errors, but they comprise a very great work, one which contributed a good deal to human society. Not only did this work keep alive for the west the idea of the state and the fundamentals of social organization, but "by permeating the rigor of the old Roman law with the new spirit of Christianity, it introduced into the law a regard, hitherto unknown, for social justice, public morality, and humanity."<sup>14</sup>

**Sculpture and painting.** Byzantine artists combined influences from the orient with the Christian spirit, producing a brilliant and luxurious art. Their art was used to glorify the Christian religion. They portrayed Christian saints, but foreign indeed to the simplicity of Jesus' teachings were the ornate, elegant, and formalized figures of their mosaics and paintings. The icon on this page is Christian, but the oriental influences are evident in the



BYZANTINE ICON (RELIGIOUS PAINTING)



BYZANTINE CAPITAL, CHURCH OF SAN VITALE



BYZANTINE MADONNA (MOSAIC) IN SAINT SOPHIA CATHEDRAL, CONSTANTINOPLE

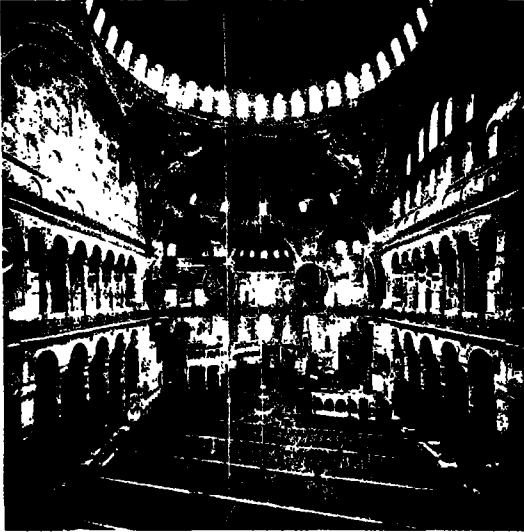
luxurious robe and the beautiful gold decoration of the halo. Love of bright colors and rich orientalism combined with Christian religious concepts is one of the outstanding features of Byzantine art. The iconoclastic controversy resulted in the substitution of flat representations for statues. Decorative patterns very oriental in feeling, such as those on the capital illustrated on page 228, were used instead of figures. Note how much more successful the artist was in working out interlaced decorative patterns than in carving the animals.

Byzantine artists used beautiful mosaics for church decoration. Mosaics are made with small pieces of glass or stone set in cement in patterns, providing decorations of brilliant colors, usually with gold backgrounds. The church patterns depict scenes from Christian legends and are often highly symbolic. In the mosaic above, the figure on the left carries a model of a church and the one on the right, a model of a city, symbolizing the religious and the secular dedicating themselves to the

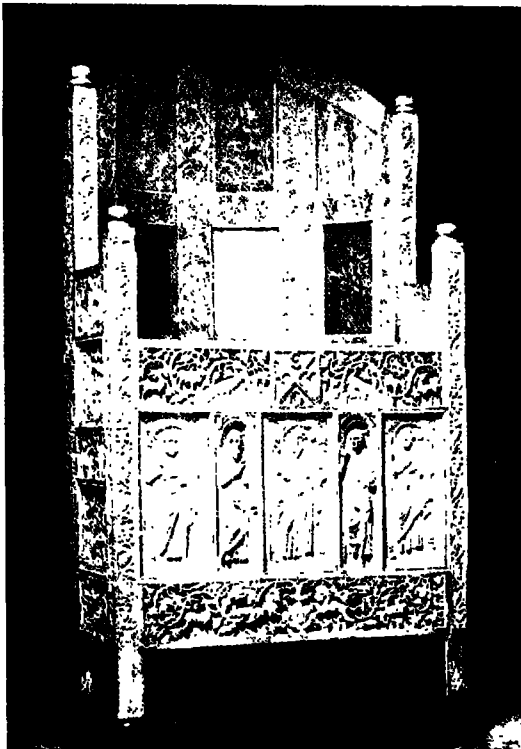
Virgin and Child. The Madonna shows the stylized treatment typical of Byzantine mosaic work. The medium, consisting of rows of stones, would not allow realistic or subtle representation.

Byzantine painting was generally flat and sometimes stereotyped, yet such early Italian masters as Cimabue and Giotto received inspiration from its religious subject matter, its color, and its beautiful patterns. Painted religious images, called icons, were used in daily worship. The icons were stiff and conventionalized, and many of their conventions, such as the hook-like lines to suggest folds in drapery (notice particularly those on the knee in the illustration), were learned by rote. However, Byzantine artists had an important influence on later painting. They kept alive the technique of tempera on wood. Tempera painting uses egg as a binding material. It is a permanent and very exact medium, excellent for work with lines and hard edges. Although it gives a brilliancy of color, it does not adapt itself

readily to soft shading and realistic light and shade. The icons reveal certain beauties such as sensitive oriental line, equally oriental patterning of flat colors, and backgrounds of brilliant color and gold. The painter did not care



THE CATHEDRAL OF ST. SOPHIA



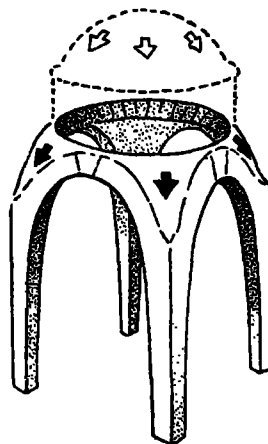
IVORY THRONE IN THE PALACE AT RAVENNA

for realistic representation, designing his work instead so that its lines were very rhythmic. He cared most about a pleasant pattern of line and color, often distorting his subject to compose as he wished.

**Minor arts.** Byzantine artists excelled in illuminating manuscripts. Their work is noted for its elaborate detail and brilliant coloring. Carvings in ivory were a distinctly Byzantine achievement, as were decorated book covers, caskets, thrones, and altars. The throne below shows the richness of detail typical of this work, with decorative animals, plants, and stylized human figures. We owe much to the rich inventiveness of the Byzantines. Their decorative motifs and ivory carvings were later translated almost literally into stone in early Romanesque sculpture. Enamel working was also highly developed; it too was used for ornamental purposes, such as enriching crowns, icon frames, and altar fronts. Byzantine jewelers made themselves famous with their skill in creating designs in precious metals and jewels.

**Architecture.** The most outstanding Byzantine artistic achievement was in church architecture. The church of St. Sophia at Constantinople, built by order of Justinian and formally opened by him in 537, is a huge edifice designed like a great Greek cross and crowned with an immense dome. The effect of the radiance from the light catching the mosaics has been related by one Byzantine writer:

**PENDENTIVES** are the spherical triangles formed at each corner of the square, arched sub-structure supporting a dome. The key-stones of the arches plus the top sides of the spherical triangles form a continuous circle which accepts the thrust of the dome and distributes it to the four corner piers. In other words, the support of a circle, or cylinder, is transformed to the support of a square.



"The dome of Saint Sophia seems to float in the air. . . . You would say that sunlight grew in it."<sup>15</sup> Procopius describes his impressions: "Who can tell of the splendour of the columns and marbles with which the church is adorned? One would think that one had come upon a flowery meadow; one marvels at the purple hues of some and the green of others. . . ." <sup>16</sup> Ironically, the church today is dedicated to God in the name of Allah. Extra chapels and minarets have been added since it has become a mosque, and its magnificent mosaics were whitewashed by a people whose faith forbids the use of pictures in a mosque. However, the present Turkish government has permitted large portions of the walls to be cleansed of whitewash.

The principle upon which St. Sophia is built represents an important Byzantine con-

tribution to the science of architecture. The Romans had made use of the dome in the Pantheon, but their dome had been erected upon a flat, circular wall. The dome of St. Sophia is raised above the roof of the remaining portions of the building and rests on the keystones of four arches that spring from four large piers at each corner of a square. The problem of raising a dome over a square area is solved by means of pendentives, illustrated in the diagram on page 230. St. Sophia is a particularly fine example of the influence of the orient. It follows the oriental idea of simple, plain exteriors and ornate, luxurious interiors. The pendentive, brilliantly evolved by Byzantine architects, was copied by western builders occasionally in Romanesque buildings, and notably in the cathedral of St. Mark's at Venice.

### Summary

The ornate civilization that centered for a thousand years about Constantinople, crossroads of the world, was fascinatingly cosmopolitan, for its inhabitants came from diverse regions of Europe and Asia, enriching the city on the Golden Horn with a multitude of new customs and ideas. The variegated social life of those who flocked to St. Sophia and the Hippodrome, the costly wares and the lively bickerings of merchants who touched even distant Russia, the bejeweled splendor of Byzantine art and the stately strength of Constantinople's buildings—all these, together with the nervous energy exhibited by a people conditioned through historical and geographical circumstance to "live dangerously," mark this civilization as peculiarly kaleidoscopic.

But Constantinople was much more than a cultural *potpourri*. When western Europe declined after the waning of the classical world, and learning was all but lost, the Byzantine world remained the custodian of classical knowledge and ideals, until a resurgent west was able to assume its guardianship. For a thousand years Constantinople acted as a buffer state, repulsing the attacks of Persians, Arabs, Turks, and Mongols, while the weak, divided west grew in strength.

And Constantinople did much more than all this. In "The City," Roman, Greek, and oriental elements were fused into a distinct and original culture. A proof of this is found in Byzantine art, where the lavish riches of the orient united in the glorification of Christianity. Many other contributions of lasting value came from Byzantine society: the codification of Roman law, liturgical verse which enriched church ceremony, and commercial practices such as a standardized currency. Lastly, the Byzantine empire spread the message of Christianity to the Slavic peoples and brought to Russia and neighboring lands the benefits of a modified Greek alphabet and literature.



## MOHAMMEDAN EXPANSION: 570-1600

### Beginnings of Islam

570?-632	Life of Mohammed	
611	Mohammed has his first "revelation"	
622	The <i>Hegira</i> : Mohammed flees from Mecca to Medina	First mosque built at Medina
630	Mohammed returns to Mecca in triumph	Idols eliminated from Kaaba: monotheism Temple becomes center of Islam

### Spread of Islam

632-656	Mohammedanism expands under guidance of caliphs Arabia united; Near East conquered	Koran written
656-661	Civil war	
661-750	The Omniad dynasty: Capital shifted to Damascus	
705-715	Greatest dominion of Omniads Empire from Pyrenees and Atlantic to Indian and Central Asia	Government according to local custom
732	Moslems checked in France at Battle of Tours	
750-1258	Abbasid dynasty: Capital at Bagdad	High tide of Islamic civilization; Persian element in ascendancy
756	Empire begins to break up into autonomous states	Era of translation, 762-900
786-809	Harun al-Rashid's rule Oriental autocracy Friendly relations with Charlemagne	Golden Age of Moslem learning, 900-1100 Excellence in architecture and decorative arts Poetry: <i>Rubāiyāt</i> Prose: <i>Arabian Nights</i> Science: Alhazen Medicine: Rhazes, Avicenna Geography: Al-Idrisi, Yaqut Philosophy: Avicenna, Maimonides, Averröes
1055	Seljuk Turks gain control of caliphate	
1453	Ottoman Turks capture Constantinople	
15th and 16th centuries	Period of greatest power of Ottoman Turks	

## CHAPTER 9

# *Allah Akbar!*



MEDIEVAL literature is filled with the word "Mahound," a name given to the devil himself. Because the name is a corruption of Mohammed, one can easily see with what horror our pious ancestors of the Middle Ages looked upon the founder of the great and warlike faith which threatened for centuries to engulf all Europe. In this spirit the crusaders set forth to gain spiritual blessing—and earthly booty—by ridding the Holy Land of the Prophet's followers, the infidels. They failed to achieve their purpose, however, a sore point which must have rankled in the minds of more than one devout theologian who could not understand how Mahound was able to triumph over the forces of righteousness. But it must have been even harder for the average crusader to understand that his heathen foe was the product of an infinitely more highly developed and sophisticated civilization than any in Christendom. We know today that the crusades were mainly a military fiasco and failed to attain their desired goal but were a success in a way which the crusaders could scarcely have imagined and would have been shocked to discover. They established invaluable points of contact between Christendom and the Mohammedan world and aided the infiltration of the achievements of Mohammedan civilization into the west.

The civilization we are about to analyze is religious in its origin, for it springs from the teachings of a prophet who lived in what had been until his time an obscure and out-of-the-way corner of the world—Arabia. That teacher, Mohammed, united the Arabian peninsula with his fundamental teaching of monotheism and Islam (submission to God). Then followed the remarkable spread of his dynamic faith, in so short a time that within a hundred years after the Prophet's death his followers had sped west-

ward along the northern coast of Africa, crossed into Spain and beyond the Pyrenees. They had pushed northeast along the shores of Asia Minor and almost captured Constantinople itself, migrated eastward past the Tigris and Euphrates, overrun Persia, extended their power into Turkestan, and even penetrated the valley of the Indus. The breath-taking religious and political expansion was followed by a flowering of Islamic culture which rivaled the achievements of the Byzantine empire and far surpassed those of western Europe. The importance of Mohammedan achievements, together with the significance of Islamic culture diffusion and its effects upon the west, makes it imperative that we give full appreciation to this rich medieval civilization.

### *Mohammed and His Faith*

**Arabia and the Arabs.** Arabia is a quadrangular-shaped peninsula with an area of about 1,200,000 square miles. It is surrounded by water except to the north and northeast, where it is bounded by Syria and Mesopotamia, the valley of the Tigris and Euphrates. At least a third of Arabia is a desert, while rainfall is scarce in the remainder of the peninsula. Thus vegetation is scant and there is little incentive for active agricultural life. The inhabitants are largely nomadic "sons of the desert." Their racial origins are uncertain. They are of the Semitic language group, which includes the Assyrians, Chaldeans, Hebrews, Phoenicians, and Arameans.

**Nomad life.** The roving desert Arabs, the Bedouins, had not attained in the sixth century the same degree of civilization which their distant kinsmen, the Hebrews, had long before enjoyed. The Arabs led a wandering life. They were driven by climate and the seasons from place to place in search of vegetation sufficient to keep alive their flocks of sheep and goats. Their economic life was thus precarious and simple, augmented, however, by the persistent practice of raiding caravans. Their social and political organization was, and is today, patriarchal in character. The family is controlled by a head man, while families join together into a tribe ruled over by a leader called the sheik. In the sixth century, the Arabs were emerging from barbarism, a transition marked by their slow acceptance of a written language. They were given to such practices as blood feuds, excessive drunkenness and brawling, and the burying alive of unwanted female infants. They were also intensely superstitious, strongly addicted to storytelling, and sincere lovers of poetry.

**Mecca.** Although the majority of Arabs were nomads, some important communities grew up along the coasts, whence sea trading developed. The most important region lay along the Red Sea and was known as Hejaz (see map, page 235). It was the commercial center of Arabia. The most important towns were Medina, a date-growing community, and Mecca, fifty miles inland from the port of Jiddah and the terminus of the caravan route across the desert to Syria. Moreover, Mecca was important as a holy place and possessed the Kaaba (the cube), a square temple of uncut stones which contained the sacred Black Stone, by legend brought to Abraham and his son Ishmael by Gabriel. The stone had once been white, according to tradition, but the sins of those who touched it had changed it to black. The Kaaba housed the images of some three hundred sixty local deities and fetishes (material objects believed to be dwelling places of spirits and capable of protecting the worshippers from harm and disease), for idol worship was popular among the people of the sixth century. Credence was also given to the existence of a vague and little understood deity who was the ruler of the universe. He was called Allah-Taala (God Almighty), but he did not figure actively in popular religion, because he was not supposed to be particularly interested in human affairs.

**Mohammed (570?-632).** Into this environment at Mecca there was born about 570 A.D. a person destined to transform completely the religious, political, and social organization of his people. Mohammed came from a family that belonged to the powerful Kuraish tribe, but he was brought up a poor boy who had to tend sheep much of his time and hence

never obtained a formal education. When about twenty years of age he entered the service of the wealthy widow Khadijah, whose caravans traded with Syria. Young Mohammed appears to have been an excellent profit-maker for the widow. In his twenty-ninth year he married Khadijah, some eleven years his elder. Through his marriage Mohammed attained economic security and a social position of importance in Mecca. Yet throughout his interesting life, the future Prophet lived simply, remained abstemious in all his habits, and was particularly fond of children. In appearance Mohammed is said to have been of medium height, with an oval face, large eyes, long dark hair, and a dignified mien.

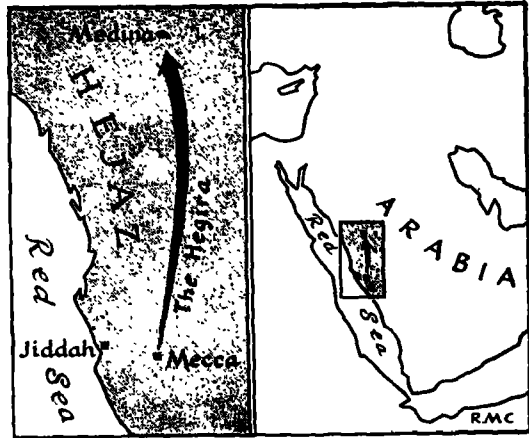
Mohammed was in the habit of retiring to a small cave among nearby foothills to wrestle with the philosophical problems that beset his mind. One day in the cave Mohammed is supposed to have heard a voice commanding,

"Recite in the name of the Lord who created—  
Created Man from nought but congealed blood;—

Recite! For thy Lord is beneficent. . . ."

The heavenly speaker then told Mohammed, "Thou art God's Prophet, and I am Gabriel," and, giving the astonished mortal the blessing of Allah, departed. Revelations appeared to him frequently in the years that followed (the first was in 611), and from them he conceived his religious views. We shall not concern ourselves with the validity of his revelations; it is the effect of his experiences which concerns us. Mohammed was utterly sincere in believing them valid, and his own sincerity acted as a tremendous driving power in creating a dynamic religion which affected three continents. Mohammed quickly converted his wife and his cousin Ali, as well as Abu Bekr, who became prominent later as Mohammed's most trusted adviser. But the new teachings proved unpopular with most Meccans, who saw in Mohammed's monotheism a distinct threat to the city's lucrative pilgrimage trade centering about the many-idoled Kaaba.

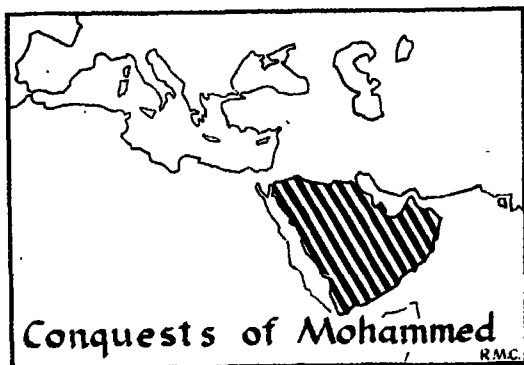
**The Hegira.** Khadijah died in 619. At the same time the popularity of Mohammed reached its lowest point. Finally in 622 he fled his native city and journeyed northward to Medina. That year, which marks at once the lowest ebb in Mohammed's fortunes and the start of his phenomenal success as a religious



leader, is reckoned by the Moslems (followers of Mohammed) as the year one. The epoch-making flight is called the Hegira. It represents the end of Mohammed's persecution and the creation of a conquering religious organization. Where his kinsmen at Mecca had rejected him, the townsmen of Medina accepted Mohammed as their leader. He built there his first mosque and set forth new codes of conduct regarding social, religious, and political problems. Allah was worshiped as the only real God and Mohammed was his chosen mouthpiece, or Prophet. Medina became a theocracy: Its government recognized the immediate sovereignty of God, and government leaders considered themselves his spokesmen.

**Arabian adoption of the faith.** The religion spread, as did the fame of Mohammed. Various raids and skirmishes between the Meccans and the men of Medina during the years 624-630 resulted in victory for the Medinans, added to Mohammed's popularity, and gave weight to his claim that Allah would aid his followers on the field of battle. At last, in 630 A.D., having won converts far and wide and deeming his forces irresistible, Mohammed marched on his native city, and his old enemies had to surrender Mecca to Allah and His Prophet. Mohammed cast out of the Kaaba its multitude of idols and stone fetishes, but the temple itself, together with the sacred Black Stone, was preserved as the supreme center of Islam, the holy place or "mecca" to which each devout Moslem should make a pilgrimage.

With Mecca and Medina both under his absolute control, Mohammed became the undisputed master of the Arabian peninsula.



Tribe after tribe of Bedouins offered him their submission and loyalty. In 632 the Prophet passed away, after having created a faith which had at last united Arabia and would astound the world with its proselytizing power.

**The Koran.** The new religion the Prophet taught is to be found in the Moslem Bible, the Koran (*Quran*, Reading). One of its cardinal features is that God Himself is supposed to be the principal speaker in the Koran. It gives the book an infallible authority in the eyes of its followers, and when they carry out its precepts they feel that they are God's own messengers.<sup>1</sup> Mohammed himself evidently did not write down any part of the Koran. After he had been dead about a year, his close friend Abu Bekr ordered the Prophet's teachings to be compiled as accurately as memory permitted. Disputes arose over the words of the Prophet, and the third successor of Mohammed, Othman, issued an official text.

The Koran contains 114 chapters, or Suras, arranged according to their length, with the longest chapter placed first. Thus there is no logical sequence to the material in the book, and in reading it one must appreciate that each chapter represents a separate message set forth at some particular event. The Koran in its original form is made up of irregular lines containing definite cadences. It is highly poetic in its use of imagery. Here is the opening prayer, rendered into free verse:

Praise be to Allah, Lord of the worlds,  
Merciful and compassionate,  
King of the Day of Judgment!

Thee do we serve, and of Thee do we beg assistance.

Guide us in the right way—

The way of them who are pleasing in Thy sight,

Not of them who bear Thy wrath; not of them who are astray.<sup>2</sup>

The next selection might almost be found in the Old Testament, where the orthodox Jew or Christian would welcome its sentiment and majesty of thought:

Praise the name of thy Lord, the Most High,  
Who created and designed all things,  
Who preordained them and directs them;  
Who makes the grass to grow in the pastures,  
And then burns it brown like straw. . . .

Happy is he who purifies himself

And remembers the name of his Lord in prayer.

But ye prefer the life of this world,  
Though that to come is better, and is everlasting.

For this of a truth was in the books of old;  
The books of Abraham and Moses.<sup>3</sup>

Mohammed never ceased describing the coming Day of Judgment and the pleasures or pains which were to accrue therefrom. No one reading the lines below can fail to catch the vivid quality of their message. In some respects this passage is reminiscent of that selection from *Ecclesiastes* which we read in connection with Hebrew literature.

When the sun shall be folded up,  
And when the stars shall shoot downwards,  
And when the mountains shall be set in motion,

And when the camels ten months gone with foal shall be abandoned,

And when the wild beasts shall be gathered together,

And when the seas shall be swollen,  
And when the damsel that had been buried alive shall be asked

For what crime she was put to death,  
And when the leaves of the Book shall be unrolled,

And when the heaven shall be stripped away,  
And when hell shall be made to blaze,  
And when paradise shall be brought near,  
Every soul shall know what it hath produced.<sup>4</sup>

**Origins of Mohammedanism.** We have seen that Arabia was the common ground of many different religions, especially Persian, Hebrew, and Christian. From such a welter of religious ideas, brought largely to Arabia by traders

from neighboring countries, Mohammed added to his new religion many features. The prophet relied especially upon the Old Testament, praising the Jewish patriarchs and leaders. That Mohammed was acquainted with Christianity is proved by his acknowledgment of Christ as one of the major prophets preceding Mohammed, but the New Testament is not cited specifically as is the Old.

*The Mohammedan faith.* What was the new religion which the Prophet taught? The six main beliefs to which every good Moslem adheres implicitly are:

1. Belief in one God, Allah.
2. Belief in angels who intercede for men.
3. Belief in the Koran.
4. Belief in the prophets of Allah.
5. Belief in judgment, paradise, and hell.
6. Belief in the divine decrees.<sup>5</sup>

The central tenet of Mohammedanism is monotheism. There is only one God, Allah. Mohammed may have arrived at an independent conclusion that the universe must have been the creation of one supreme being, although it appears likely that he was also influenced by the monotheistic concepts of the Jews and Christians, with whom he came in contact during his trading missions as a young man. But Mohammed rejected the trinitarian belief of the Christians that God was somehow divided into Three Persons, distinct yet indivisible. Many names are used in the Koran to describe the power and majesty of the Creator: the One, the Mighty, the Powerful, the King, the Overcomer, the Avenger, the Dominator, the Slayer, the Provider, the Compassionate, the Forgiving. God rewards men who act according to His laws and punishes those who transgress them. Salvation is attained by all who submit to God, that is, live according to his rule as revealed by Mohammed. Hence Mohammed used the word "Islam" (submission to God) to characterize his faith.

There are angels who intercede for men. Eight angels guard God's throne, nineteen guard Hell, and Gabriel is the archangel. There also exist *jinn*, or genii, who are spirits midway between men and angels. Some genii are good and some are wicked. The most powerful of the latter is the devil, called *shaitan* in the Koran, from the Hebrew Satan.

The Koran is accepted as a direct revelation from Allah to Mohammed and hence forms the basis of all Moslem teaching. The Koran

lists twenty-eight prophets, twenty-two of them from the Old Testament, three from the New Testament (including Jesus), and three from outside the Bible (one of whom is Alexander the Great). But to Moslems the greatest of the prophets is, of course, Mohammed.

Mohammed used 852 verses to foretell the fateful Day of Judgment when Allah would reward all men with either eternal bliss or punishment. Geography played an important role in the Prophet's concepts of Heaven and Hell, even as it did with the Hebrew theologians. Paradise is pictured as a great garden filled with fountains, rivers, shade trees, and a balmy climate, while Hell is hotter than the most torturous desert which the Arabs might imagine, and abounds in "burning wind and scalding water." What could be more logical than for a son of the desert to picture Paradise as a glorified oasis set apart from a desert Hell with its torments of burning thirst and broiling sun? Here is one description of the life which the inheritors of Paradise shall pass in "the gardens of delight":

Upon inwrought couches,  
Reclining thereon, face to face.  
Youths ever-young shall go unto them round  
about  
With goblets and ewers and a cup of flowing  
wine,  
Their [heads] shall ache not with it, neither  
shall they be drunken;  
And with fruits of the [sorts] which they shall  
choose,  
And the flesh of birds of the [kinds] which  
they shall desire.  
And damsels with eyes like pearls laid up  
We will give them as a reward for that which  
they have done.  
Therein shall they hear no vain discourse nor  
accusation of sin,  
But [only] the saying, "Peace! Peace!"<sup>6</sup>

But the inmates of the lower world shall drink boiling water, "And ye shall drink as thirsty camels drink!" For in this Hell the sinner "shall not die therein, and he shall not live."

In addition to the six main tenets of Islam there are five essential duties which a loyal Moslem must perform:

1. Repetition of the creed every day in the original Arabic, "There is no God but Allah, and Mohammed is his Prophet."

2. Prayer. The Koran demands this five times a day. The praying person must bow toward Mecca.
3. Almsgiving.
4. Fasting during the days of the month of Ramadan.
5. The pilgrimage to Mecca at least once in a lifetime if at all possible.<sup>7</sup>

**Influence of Mohammedan teachings.** The teachings of the Prophet had an elevating effect upon his followers. He attacked idolatry and gave the Arabs the much more refined concept of monotheism. His ethical injunctions forbade acts of revenge, counseling instead the practice of forgiveness. He banned infanticide, discouraged the drinking of alcoholic liquor, and attempted to have women treated more humanely than formerly, although sanctioning the maintenance of four wives and an unspecified number of concubines. Mohammed stressed the essential unity of all true believers and thus prevented dangerous class distinctions and ensured equality of all Moslems before the law. In this way Islam was spared the priestly tyranny which arose in India, where the Brahmans considered themselves superior to all other classes.

Christians have criticized much in Islam. They say that it recommends the use of the sword to convert the unbeliever, it appeals to the sensuous in man with its promises of reward, and it is often naïve in its philosophy. The belief in fatalism (*kismet*) among so many Mohammedans is frankly negative and unhealthy, while the social and moral status to which Moslem women have been subjected in the past is low by western standards. But despite these weaknesses, Islam has been, and is, a great religion. It emphasizes kindness to slaves and animals, respect for parents, moderation and hygiene in personal habits, protection of the weak and ill, and charity toward the poor and unfortunate. It united masses of people who, prior to the time of Mohammed, had never known social solidarity or a civilization higher than that of the desert. With the expansion of the faith from continent to continent in the years immediately following the Prophet's death, a rich and varied civilization was born, probably the richest in the medieval west. It is remarkable how one man—born a camel-driver in a remote caravan terminus in the desert—could have so affected the course of world history.

### *The Spread of Islam*

**Reasons for Islam's spread.** The phenomenal success of the spread of the new faith was based on several significant facts. First of all, the Prophet had taught that any Moslem dying in battle for the faith was as-



*Mohammedanism was spread by conquest from Spain to India, while missionaries carried the faith even farther throughout the Old World.*

sured certain entrance into Paradise. The sanctification of warfare bred in the Moslem Arabs, who already possessed a fierce love of fighting, a fanaticism that proved well-nigh irresistible. Secondly, the Prophet had promised his followers world dominion if they should carry Islam to the ends of the earth, and the prospect of gaining rich and fertile territory must have proved a strong incentive to a people who had been forced to eke out a bare existence from a barren desert. Lastly, the policy adopted by the Moslem conquerors toward their subject peoples worked to their advantage. In comparison with the stern government of the Byzantine emperors, that of the Mohammedans was tolerant. Jews and Christians, for example, discovered that if they submitted to the new rule they would be allowed to pursue their former way of living and retain their own religion. Islam's tolerant attitude, together with the simplicity of its creed, attracted large numbers of converts from among Christians, Jews, and Zoroastrians.

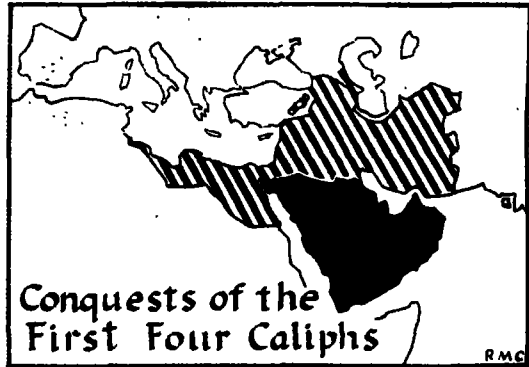
Largely on account of the fear and hatred

our medieval ancestors bore toward the Moslems, the tradition has persisted down to our times that Mohammedanism was a faith inflicted upon defenseless, peaceful people by sword-flourishing fanatics. The opposite is much nearer the truth. The Moslem leaders were interested in extending their political control, and they knew that to interfere forcibly with another people's faith is the surest means of bringing about revolt. Furthermore, the Mohammedans needed the economic support of the people of other religions, and so they chose to tolerate their different views.<sup>8</sup>

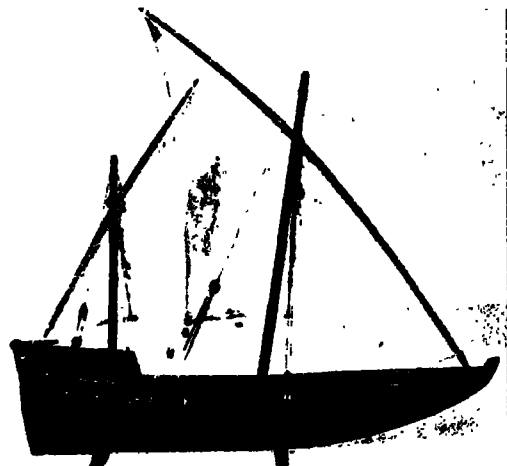
**Mohammed's ruling successors.** Mohammed died in 632, with a great portion of Arabia converted to Islam. On his death the question arose as to who should direct the fortunes of the faith. The Prophet had but one child, a daughter called Fatima. The rule passed instead to Mohammed's most trusted friend and adviser, Abu Bekr, who thus became the first caliph (*Khalifa*, successor of the Prophet).

The caliph, who was "Successor of the Prophet" and "Commander of the Faithful," had as his most important duty the preservation and extension of the faith, and because of the inseparable tie-up of the religious, social, and political aspects of Islam, he was the most important figure in the Moslem world. He also had some judicial power but almost no power to legislate. This peculiar situation arose from the doctrine that the only valid law was Divine Law, which had been given by God to the world through the agency of Mohammed. Therefore there could be no new law but only the reinterpretation of the one and only Divine Law. It was the special function of the *ulema*, or doctors of law, to perform the important task of interpretation.

The popularly acclaimed Abu Bekr died two years after Mohammed (634), and the caliphate fell to another of Mohammed's faithful advisers, Omar, who ruled wisely until his death in 644. A son-in-law of the Prophet, named Othman, then assumed control until he was slain in 656, when he was succeeded by Ali, a younger cousin of Mohammed. The first four caliphs had been intimately associated with the Prophet, and they are known as those "who followed a right course." They consolidated the position of Islam throughout Arabia, conquered all the Near East, and expanded westward along the northern coast of Africa, as the map shows.

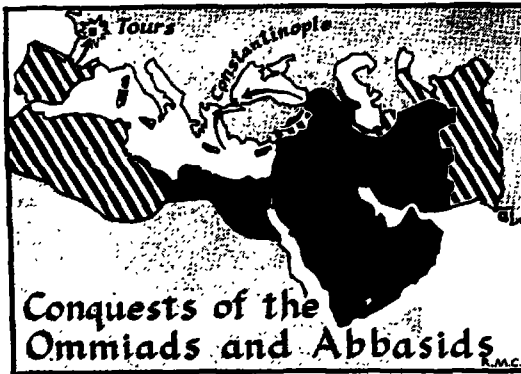


**The Ommiads.** From 656 to 661 there was a period of civil war among various claimants to the caliphate. Finally an able leader named Moawiyah triumphed and founded a new dynasty known as the Ommiad, which ruled from 661 to 750. Because the new caliph was supported most strongly in Syria, he shifted the capital of the empire from Medina to Damascus and set up an administrative organization based largely on Byzantine principles. A powerful Moslem fleet constructed by Moawiyah proved victorious over the Byzantine fleet and gained for the Ommiads some islands in the eastern Mediterranean. The forces of Islam now swept through Asia Minor and from the south and east converged on Constantinople. However, that city was able to repel all Moslem attacks until the fatal year 1453. Turning their attention next to the



*This is a model of an Arab dhow. In frail ships like this one—150 to 200 tons—the Arabs sailed the Mediterranean, invaded Spain and the African coast, and threatened Constantinople.*





west, the Moslems began the conquest of the whole of northern Africa. At first they encountered stubborn resistance from the Moors, but they eventually won out, and the warlike Moors were converted by the thousands to the strength of Islam.

Across the western entrance to the Mediterranean lay the weak kingdom of the Visigoths in Spain. In 711 an army of Moors led by Tarik (the word Gibraltar comes from "Gebel-al-Tarik"—"Rock of Tarik") landed on the coast of Spain and within seven years had forced its way beyond the Pyrenees (though not under Tarik, who had been recalled). Continuing northward they swept across what is now south and central France and were turned back only at the battle of Tours by Charles Martel in 732, a century after Mohammed's death.

The Mohammedans also expanded into central Asia, raiding and seizing lands held by the Turks, Afghans, Chinese, Tibetans, and Hindus. So successful was this eastern push that before the eighth century was half over the Mohammedan warriors could claim for the caliph lands in Turkestan and in the Indus valley. Still later they entered India, to conquer it and control its people until the British came in the eighteenth century.

The Ommyads held their greatest dominion during the caliphate of al-Walid (705-715), when they controlled an empire extending from the Pyrenees and the Atlantic to India and central Asia (map above). Their empire was governed according to local customs, for the Arabs were not themselves organizers like the Romans. They made few radical changes in government administration in the lands they conquered but took care to place their own officers in the posts of greatest importance.

**The Abbasids.** But the Ommyads themselves were falling into disrepute throughout the empire, especially among the Moslems of Persia, who resented the hegemony exercised by Syrian interests at Damascus. After various unsuccessful insurrections, a new dynasty, the Abbasid (which traced its descent from Abbas, the uncle of Mohammed), rose to power in 750 and established its capital at the newly built city of Bagdad. The Abbasid dynasty ruled from 750 to 1258 and marks the high tide of Islamic civilization. For the first time the Persian element, which was the most intellectual in the Moslem world, gained ascendancy. The Abbasid caliphs reduced the old Arabic aristocracy and set themselves up as oriental autocrats, surrounded by a lavish court life that would have distressed the simple-living Mohammed.

During the rule of Harun al-Rashid especially, from 786 to 809, Moslem civilization attained that dazzling state described in the immortal tales of the *Arabian Nights*. The caliphs were extraordinarily generous patrons of the arts and sciences, and scholars were welcomed to their courts irrespective of their racial or religious backgrounds. The large cities which sprang up—Bagdad, Cairo, and Cordova—were seething with strangers from all corners of the known world. Around the bazaars could be seen merchants who had brought fabulous carpets from Persia, delicate silks from China, tempered steel from Damascus, cottons from Egypt, red and yellow Moroccan leather, together with the tasseled fez, and jewelry and fabrics from Bagdad, whence came also the new paper fashioned out of rags, an art copied from the Chinese. In the great capital there could be found swarming past the bazaars and up the twisting alleys a motley population: guardsmen of the caliph, beggars, Ethiopians, gesticulating traders, veiled harem girls under escort of eunuchs, Hindu philosophers, Byzantine merchants, poets, painters, ruffians, desert tribesmen, and a host of others, clad in every color.

Life flourished under Harun al-Rashid because the Mohammedans drew on the entire known world for customs, culture, and inventions. The high state of their civilization can be appreciated when one contrasts it with the barren life pursued by the subjects of Harun al-Rashid's famous western contemporary, Charlemagne.

**Political disintegration of the empire.** But the Abbasids, like the Ommiads before them, declined in power. Owing to internal weaknesses, including a breakdown in the administrative system, the political solidarity of Islam disintegrated. An Ommiad emir (prince or commander) broke away from Abbasid control in 756 and set up his own dynasty at Cordova in Spain, which became a caliphate in 929. Another caliphate, the Fatimid, was established in 909 in north Africa, and in 969 its capital was set up in Cairo. The Abbasids in Bagdad could do nothing to stem the disintegration of the empire into autonomous states. They themselves, in fact, had become victims of rival political factions in Bagdad.

**The Seljuk Turks.** The eleventh century saw the Abbasids fall under the control of the Seljuk Turks, a Tatar or Mongol people. The Seljuk Turks had been employed originally as mercenary troops by the Abbasids but had proved so powerful that in 1055 they began to rule the caliphs as they liked. They completely subdued all Persia and defeated the Byzantine emperor in 1071, crippling his power. It was the great advance by the Turks through Asia Minor that prompted Pope Urban II in 1095 to set western Christendom the holy task of wresting from the infidel the Lord's Sepulchre in Jerusalem.



**Disintegration of Islam** RMC

The Seljuks continued to dominate the puppet Abbasids until 1258, when the Mongol forces of a nephew of the dreaded Genghis Khan (d. 1227) devastated Bagdad and put an end to the Abbasid dynasty. Then came a new group of rulers, the Ottoman Turks. Like the Seljuks, they came from central Asia originally. The Ottomans adopted Islam with a fanaticism that made their might almost invincible, and, gaining control of the Abbasid dominions, the new Moslems pitted their strength against the crumbling power of the Byzantine empire. Constantinople fell at last in 1453, and Ottomans pressed on in south-eastern Europe, driving as far as Vienna, where they were turned back with difficulty in 1529 and again in 1683.

### *Political, Economic, and Social Life*

**Mohammed's changes in government.** Before Mohammed the social organization of the Arabs had been based on blood kinship. Like all other primitive societies, the Arabs were united by ties of blood. Groups claimed descent from a common ancestor and possessed a common worship and a common set of mores. The individual counted for little by himself but for much as an integral member of the group. The family interpreted the social and legal actions of its members. Mohammed substituted for blood kinship "the community of faith." The Prophet looked upon all Moslems as equal before Allah and the civil law. But after his death an aristocracy grew up, composed in theory of the descendants of Mohammed and his advisers.

**The caliph and his administration.** The one real ruler of society was, of course, Allah, and therefore Islam was a theocratic state.

"The object of government is to lead men to prosperity in this world and to salvation in the next."<sup>9</sup> Allah was believed to rule through an earthly representative, the caliph, and the latter governed all Islam according to Moslem law as prescribed in the Koran and the interpretation of the law by the learned legal doctors called the *ulema*. But the caliph could not be expected to administer his vast domains himself. Machinery was set up similar to that of the Byzantine empire. The Abbasids had ten distinct governmental departments: finance, war, expenditures, registry, correspondence, seals, court of appeals, office of posts, bureau of freedmen and slaves, and bureau of state property. The Abbasids also divided their empire into thirteen provinces, each ruled by a prefect responsible to the caliph.

At the royal palace of the Abbasids were various subordinate officials who were always

at the beck and call of the caliph. They included the chamberlain, who introduced envoys and visiting dignitaries, the executioner, who was famed for his proficiency at torture, and the astrologer, without whose advice the caliph would not act. The most powerful person next to the caliph was the vizier, who carried out the highest functions of government on behalf of his superior (and, in fact, was often the real power when the caliph was weak-willed). He appointed and deposed governors of provinces and judges, and presided over the council which was made up of the heads of different departments.

The most important department was the bureau of finance. The Moslems paid no poll tax, but the state levied a tax (the *zakah*) on arable lands, herds, wares, and gold and silver. All money collected from Moslems was given to such believers as the poor, the orphans, and slaves and captives who were to be ransomed. The unbelievers, on the other hand, were required to pay a land tax (the most important source of revenue), a poll tax, and tithes levied upon their merchandise. The caliph used the revenue from these taxes for the payment of troops, the upkeep of mosques, and the building of roads and bridges.

The government employed police, among whose duties was the regulation of public morality (such as chastising all men who dyed their gray beards black). There was also a postal system which used pigeons as letter carriers. An intelligence service employed men and women as spies to ferret out information of value to the government.

**Weaknesses of the governing system.** The caliph might nominate as his successor any one of his sons he favored, or even some kinsman whom he considered worthy. Needless to say, such a loose policy of succession proved a constant source of weakness and irritation. But the chief weakness of the entire administrative system was the extraordinary power given to the caliph in military, political, and religious matters, which under the later Abbassids proved distinctly unfortunate. Because many of the caliphs became more interested in harem delights than in governmental duties, more and more power was delegated to the vizier, who thus saw it to his advantage to foment harem intrigues in order to gain his own way. An inevitable decline in governmental efficiency resulted.

In time some of the provincial officials rebelled against the caliph and had to be recognized as sultans, or sovereigns in their own right.

**The life of a provincial ruler.** An interesting description of life in Cairo in the eleventh century has been left us by a Persian writer. The caliphal palace actually housed 30,000 people, including 1000 horse and foot guards and 12,000 servants. At festivals the young caliph could be seen, pleasant looking, clean-shaven, and simply dressed in white, riding on a mule with an attendant holding over him a parasol embroidered with precious stones. The caliph in Cairo possessed thousands of houses, generally constructed of brick, and often rising five or six stories above the lamp-lighted streets. He also owned an immense number of shops, which he rented out. The shopkeepers who sold their wares there had to sell at a fixed price. Any one of them found guilty of cheating was paraded on a camel through the streets, ringing a bell and confessing his sin to the bystanders.

The Fatimid caliph al-Mustansir was the most lavishly inclined of all the rulers. From his predecessors he inherited millions. His riches included jewels, crystal vases, inlaid gold plates, ivory and ebony inkstands, musk phials, steel mirrors, amber cups, chessboards of gold with gold and silver pieces, jeweled daggers and swords, and rich embroidered fabrics from Damascus. He is supposed to have had erected in his palace a pavilion shaped like the sacred Kaaba in Mecca. There he would drink to the accompaniment of stringed music and sweet singers, and maintain (in perfect truth), "This is pleasanter than staring at a black stone, listening to the drone of the muezzin, and drinking bad water."<sup>10</sup> Gone was the Prophet's ideal of simple living here.

**Harun al-Rashid (786-809).** Just as the Abbasid was the most brilliant of all Moslem dynasties, so the reign of Harun al-Rashid was the most spectacular of the Abbasid rule. He was the contemporary of the great Charlemagne, and there can be no doubt that Harun was the more powerful ruler and the symbol of the more highly advanced culture. The two monarchs were on the most friendly terms, even though their friendship arose out of self-interest. Charlemagne wanted Harun as a possible ally against the Byzantine emperors (who we noticed earlier, resented the pretensions of

the Frankish kings, assumed largely as the result of the iconoclastic controversy). Harun wanted to use Charlemagne against the powerful Omniad caliphs of Cordova, who had broken away from Abbasid domination. Numerous embassies and presents were exchanged between Charlemagne and Harun. For example, the Moslems sent the Christian rich fabrics, aromatics, and even an elephant. An intricate clock from Bagdad seems to have been treated in the barbaric west as a miracle.

Relations between the caliphate and the Byzantine empire were never very cordial, for conflicts were always breaking out over the constantly shifting boundary lines that separated Christian and Moslem territories. In 782 Harun (while yet only the future successor to the throne) commanded an expedition that reached the Bosphorus and forced the Byzantine leaders to conclude a humiliating peace which involved the payment of a huge tribute. Later the Byzantine emperor repudiated the terms of the treaty and even sent a letter asking for the return of the tribute money already paid. Harun al-Rashid, in magnificent anger and scorn, sent back the letter with the following penned on the back:

"In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate. From Haroun, Commander of the Faithful, to Nicephorus, the dog of the Greeks. I have read your letter, you son of a she-infidel, and you shall see the answer before you hear it."<sup>11</sup>

Whereupon the irate caliph sent forth expeditions to ravage Asia Minor, captured several Byzantine cities, and even imposed a humiliating tax on the emperor himself and on each member of the royal household.

**The capital city.** Bagdad in the days of Harun al-Rashid was indeed a city worthy of description. Its wealth and splendor equaled that of Constantinople, and its chief glory was the royal palace. With its annexes for harem, eunuchs, and officials, the caliph's residence occupied one third of Bagdad, and its gorgeously appointed audience chamber, furnished with the richest rugs, cushions, and curtains which the orient could create, must have been breath-taking in its effect.

On ceremonial occasions the extent of the caliph's riches could be better realized. At the marriage of the daughter of one of Harun's viziers, the caliph had a thousand pearls of

extraordinary size rained upon the couple, who stood upon a golden mat studded with sapphires and pearls. The royal princes and guests were showered with balls of musk, each containing a ticket claiming an estate or splendid slave. It is said that at one reception some Byzantine envoys mistook first the chief chamberlain's office and then the vizier's office for the royal audience hall. In the Hall of the Tree they saw an artificial tree of gold and silver which had on its branches birds of the same metals made to chirp by means of automatic devices. These tales could be multiplied, and it is little wonder that the magnificence and lavishness of the Abbasid court created a legend of oriental romance and splendor which has existed to our own times, chiefly in the *Arabian Nights*.<sup>12</sup>

Elsewhere we noticed the cosmopolitan nature of Bagdad, with its bazaars containing goods from all over the known world. There we would find spices, minerals, and dyes from India; rubies, fabrics, and slaves from central Asia; honey, wax, and white slaves from Scandinavia and Russia; ivory, gold dust, and black slaves from Africa. One bazaar in the city specialized in goods from China, including silks, musk, and porcelain. The merchants were a wealthy and respected group, as were the professional men and scholars. We have an account of one scholar's routine: He took a daily ride, then went to a public bath where attendants poured water over him. Then he put on a lounging robe, sipped a cool drink, and took a siesta. This concluded, he burned perfume to give himself a soothing aroma, and ordered a dinner which often consisted of soup, chicken, and bread. Then he went back to sleep, and upon awakening drank some choice old wine. To this repast he added quinces and Syrian apples whenever he desired fresh fruits.

**Moslem society.** The upper level of Abbasid society consisted of the caliph and his family, government officials, and prominent members of the army. The upper portion of the common people included literary men, scholars, artists, merchants, and professional men, while below them were ranked the farmers, herdsmen, and the country population. Slavery was prevalent, its members coming from non-Moslem groups who had in all likelihood been captured in war. Slaves were often Greeks, Slavs, and Armenians, while

many blacks were recruited from Africa. Some of the slaves were eunuchs attached to the harems, while slave girls were often employed as dancers, singers, and concubines. At first only Arabians occupied important posts, but intermarriage with non-Arabs changed the situation, so that eventually there came a time when the officials were mostly Persian or Turkish.

**Fashions and amusements.** The clothes of men included a black high-peaked hat of felt or wool, wide trousers, a shirt, vest, and jacket. Among the furnishings of the home were cushions, hand-woven carpets, tables of wood inlaid with ebony and mother-of-pearl, and a *diwan*, a sofa running around three sides of the room. The gastronomic delights of the prosperous included chicken, shelled nuts, and sherbets flavored with extracts of violets, bananas, roses, and mulberries. Although the Koran distinctly forbade the drinking of alcoholic beverages, the wealthy, the scholars, the poets, and high government officials were quite willing to forget the prohibition. One of the most popular drinks was *khamr*, made of fermented dates. Bagdad had many public baths, because a Moslem tradition states, "Cleanliness is a part of faith." Men used these baths not only for hygienic purposes but also as resorts of amusement, while women were allowed to visit the baths on special days.

Men indulged in such favorite indoor games as dice, backgammon, and chess. Or they might prefer outdoor pastimes such as archery, polo, fencing, javelin throwing, horse racing, and hunting. Many of the Abbasid caliphs were particularly fond of hunting lions and wild boars. Travelers to Persia brought back with them falconry and hawking.

**Etiquette.** The social conduct of the Moslems has been conditioned by the dictates of the Koran and the accounts of the Prophet's own life. Sayyid al-Bekri wrote a book on etiquette, in which statements attributed to Mohammed regarding conduct were reproduced. Concerning the code D. S. Margoliouth has written:

"When friends meet and salute, they should not bow, nor should they kiss, but it is right for them to embrace, i. e., put their arms round each other's shoulders; if a man sneezes, those who are present should wish him well, and they are justified in doing so even should he sneeze while saying his prayers. Many pious

men will not use fork or knife, because the Prophet is not known to have employed those instruments; if they use them, they will at least hold the fork in the right hand, because it is known that the Prophet ate with his right."<sup>13</sup>

**Mohammedan women.** Mohammedanism has been much criticized in the west for the low social and moral status assigned to women. It is true that the Prophet's permission of polygamy (a Moslem might have four legitimate wives) did not make for equality among the sexes. While it was considered a duty in Islam for men to marry, women were held in a low social state, for a woman's prime duty consisted in obeying her husband's commands, caring for his children, and managing his household.

However, in judging Mohammedan standards, we must at all times remember the task which Mohammed had in dealing with illiterate, fetish-worshipping nomads who used to abandon unwanted female infants. While Islam places women in an inferior position and forbids them to lead prayer when men are present, it assigns them a definite religious role. There is a general impression among Christians that the Moslems believe that women have no souls. Such an impression is without foundation. True enough, the delights of Paradise are painted with a view to capturing the imagination of the male, but the fact that women are allowed (and even supposed) to take part in Mohammedan religious ceremonies should prove that their reward for so acting will be the gaining of Paradise for their souls.

Under Mustapha Kemal Ataturk, Turkey after the First World War raised the status of women immeasurably by granting them the right to vote and the right to enter professions and by removing certain religious restrictions, such as the wearing of the veil. This last is a real departure from the custom of centuries, for the good Moslem regarded the woman who did not cover her face with a veil as highly immodest and brazen, and always considered Christian women, for example, as quite shameful for that reason.

**Moslem economic advantages.** We have already noted the manufacturing and commercial prosperity enjoyed by the Mohammedan empire, a prosperity that endured from the seventh through the twelfth centuries and did

not come to Europe to a similar degree until the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Added to the natural ability of the Moslems as traders were the size and wealth of Islam's territories and the far-sighted economic policies set forth by the Prophet himself, who had always encouraged commerce among his people. Certain other factors were also very important in the economic success of Islam. First of all, the empire was in a most suitable geographical position, being in close contact with three continents and thus able to shuttle goods back and forth from China to Spain and from Russia to central Africa. Another reason for its economic well-being was the tolerance of its rulers, who allowed non-Moslem merchants and craftsmen to reside in their territories and carry on mutually profitable commerce with their home countries. Again, the fact that the Moslems were skilled both in industry and agriculture gave them products which enriched their commercial activities and made for a well-balanced economy. Lastly, the presence of such splendid urban centers as Bagdad and Cordova tended to stimulate trade and industry throughout the Moslem world.

**Industry.** The textile industries of the Moslems were particularly prosperous and produced silk, cotton, muslin (the word comes from Mosul in Mesopotamia), and linen goods. Metal, leather, enamel, pottery, and the variety of luxury goods which we have enumerated in connection with Byzantine manufacturing life were also produced in abundance. As in the Byzantine empire, the workers in the great manufacturing cities of Islam were organized into guilds and crafts supervised by the government. A merchant or craftsman guilty of fraud was denounced publicly. However, despite the limitations imposed by governmental supervision, the guilds enjoyed a large measure of freedom of action.

**Trade.** Commerce was extensive and exceedingly profitable because of the daring and navigating skill of the Arab shipmasters. Their vessels could be found in the ports of India, the seas of China, the river mouths of the Black Sea, the Persian Gulf, and throughout the Mediterranean. Most of the trade was between various countries of the Moslem empire, but commerce sprang up also with Christian lands, especially after the ninth century. There can be no doubt that Islamic trade was extensive, for even in such out-of-the-way countries of northern Europe as Finland, Sweden, Russia, Norway, the British Isles, and Iceland Mohammedan coins in considerable numbers have been unearthed.<sup>14</sup> Besides trade by ships there was trade by "ships of the desert"—camels. Overland from Bagdad journeyed the great caravans to India and China or northward to Syria and Asia Minor.

The only real competitor of the Moslems was the Byzantine empire, but the commercial activities of the latter were confined to a much smaller area—the eastern Mediterranean, the Black Sea, the lands extending to the Baltic and including Russia, and Asia Minor. Furthermore, as the Middle Ages wore on, the Byzantine empire disintegrated while the Moslems managed to retain control of what they had won.

**Farming.** Moslem economic wealth was increased by the innovations made in agriculture. Mesopotamia flourished because of its extensive system of irrigation, and large quantities of fruits and cereals were grown. Wheat came from the regions of the Nile, cotton from north Africa, olives and wines from Moorish Spain, and wool from eastern Asia Minor, while Persia was noted for its horse raising. The farming system was analogous to that of the Middle Ages in Europe in that estates were worked by free peasants, slaves, and serfs.

### *Cultural Contributions*

**Arabic words in the English language.** The large number of words in the English language coming directly from Arabic will prove conclusively our debt to Moslem civilization. Some of the commoner words are algebra, zero, bazaar, traffic, lilac, admiral, magazine, cheque, tariff, douane, caravan, coffee, arabesque, lute, alkali, alchemy, attar,

cipher. Words derived from Moslem proper nouns such as muslin, mecca, damask, fez, ottoman, morris (from Moorish) are further indicative of the extent to which we have borrowed from another civilization.

The high attainment of the Mohammedans in intellectual and artistic fields cannot be attributed to the Arabs, who as a group re-

mained quite unprogressive, but rather to those peoples who had embraced Islam in Syria, Egypt, Persia, Mesopotamia, north Africa, and Spain. Diverse peoples, they were nevertheless united by a common language, Arabic. The supremacy of that tongue was kept unchallenged by the command that the Koran must not be used in translation, and the flexibility of the language made it an admirable medium for the transmission of literary and philosophical subtleties as well as the technicalities of science and medicine.

**Translations from Greek and Indian.** The amazing brilliance of Moslem learning was due not so much to indigenous genius as to Islam's ability to synthesize the best in other cultures. The cosmopolitan spirit which permeated the Abbasid dynasty supplied the tolerance necessary for new ideas, so that the philosophy and science of ancient Greece, India, and even China found a welcome in Bagdad. Under Harun al-Rashid and his successors translations of the Greek classics were made in Arabic. One of the most outstanding translators was Hunain ibn Ishaq (d. 877), a Nestorian Christian. He and his associates translated works by Galen and Hippocrates on medicine and collected manuscripts to give Bagdad a magnificent library. The search after Greek writings at last made available for Arabic scholars a complete knowledge of such Hellenistic intellects as Aristotle, Euclid, Ptolemy, and Archimedes.

The period from 762 to 900 was an era of translation not only of Greek treatises but also of those from India, whence came the Moslems' knowledge of Hindu mathematics, such as the use of "Arabic" numerals and algebra. Thus from Greece, Persia, and India came the basis of Moslem learning, and from Islam in turn an augmented knowledge was later transmitted to Jewish and Christian scholars in western Europe.<sup>15</sup>

**Advances in medicine.** The next two hundred years (900-1100) can be called the golden age of Moslem learning. The period following those centuries witnessed a decline. The two centuries were particularly significant for medicine. The first and perhaps greatest Moslem physician was al-Razi (about 865-925), better known to the west as Rhazes. One of the great doctors of all time, Rhazes wrote more than two hundred works, of which one of the most famous is *On Smallpox and Measles*,

the first clear description of the symptoms and treatment of these diseases. His most monumental writing was the *Comprehensive Book*, a huge encyclopedia. In it he cites for each disease all Greek, Syrian, Arabian, Persian, and Indian authors and includes his own personal experiences and opinions as well. Many translations of the encyclopedia were later used by European physicians, and by 1542 five separate editions had been printed in Europe. Rhazes also wrote copiously on several other subjects, including theology, mathematics, astronomy, physics, meteorology, optics, and alchemy.

The most familiar name in Moslem medicine is that of Avicenna (980-1037), a great physicist, philosopher, and physician. Into his million-word *Canon of Medicine* he packed all the legacy of Greek knowledge together with Arabic medical learning. The *Canon* was translated into Latin by Gerard of Cremona in the twelfth century and was so much in demand that it was issued sixteen times in the last half of the fifteenth century and more than twenty times in the sixteenth. It is still read and used in the orient today.

Not only did medical theory flourish at this time; hospitals were in use throughout the empire. They were divided into sections for men and women and possessed their own wards and dispensaries and sometimes even a library. Physicians, druggists, and barbers were subject to inspection regarding their qualifications.

In spite of the limitations imposed on the Arabs by their religion (such as being forbidden to study anatomy), they were in some ways superior to their European contemporaries. Whereas the Arabs were skilled practitioners whose technique was at least sane, the Christian doctors, especially during the Middle Ages, were plagued with superstition. For proof we have an account of the time of the crusades taken from the narrative of a Syrian physician called Thabit:

"They brought before me a knight in whose leg an abscess had grown; and a woman afflicted with imbecility. To the knight I applied a small poultice until the abscess opened and became well; and the woman I put on diet and made her humor wet. Then a Frankish physician came to them and said, 'This man knows nothing about treating them.' He then said to the knight, 'Which wouldst thou

prefer, living with one leg or dying with two?' The latter replied, 'Living with one leg.' The physician said, 'Bring me a strong knight and a sharp ax.' A knight came with the ax. And I was standing by. Then the physician laid the leg of the patient on a block of wood and bade the knight strike his leg with the ax and chop it off at one blow. Accordingly he struck it—while I was looking on—one blow, but the leg was not severed. He dealt another blow, upon which the marrow of the leg flowed out and the patient died on the spot. He then examined the woman and said, 'This is a woman in whose head there is a devil which has possessed her. Shave off her hair.' Accordingly they shaved it off and the woman began once more to eat their ordinary diet—garlic and mustard. Her imbecility took a turn for the worse. The physician then said, 'The devil has penetrated through her head.' He therefore took a razor, made a deep cruciform incision on it, peeled off the skin at the middle of the incision until the bone of the skull was exposed and rubbed it with salt. The woman also expired instantly. Thereupon I asked them whether my services were needed any longer, and when they replied in the negative I returned home, having learned of their medicine what I knew not before."<sup>16</sup>

**Physics and chemistry.** Other branches of science besides medicine progressed during the golden age. Physics continued the paths of inquiry laid down by Hellenistic leaders, but Moslem scientists arose who were no mere copyists. Alhazen (965-1039?) developed optics to a remarkable degree and wrote a treatise on the subject. He challenged the view of Ptolemy and Euclid that the eye sends out visual rays to its object, interested himself in optic reflections and illusions, and examined the refraction of light rays through air and water. He was the chief source of all medieval western writers on optics.<sup>17</sup>

Chemistry started out as alchemy, the attempt to transmute base metals into precious ones and to find a magic elixir for the preservation of human life. The Moslem alchemists produced many new drugs and chemicals, including alum, borax, cream of tartar, sal ammoniac, carbonate of soda, and corrosive sublimate.

**Astronomy and mathematics.** In astronomy the Mohammedans followed mainly the views of Ptolemy. They developed good astronom-

ical instruments and built observatories in some of the largest cities. But they fell into the error of the Chaldeans and Persians, mixing up astronomy with astrology, a practice that continued to plague the progress of true science for many centuries.

In mathematics the Moslems were particularly indebted to the Greeks and Hindus, from whom they learned most of their arithmetic, geometry, and algebra. From the Greeks came the geometry of Euclid and the fundamentals of trigonometry, which Ptolemy had worked out. From the Hindus came the nine signs now known as the Arabic numerals. However, it may well be that the Arabs invented the all-important zero, although some scholars would assign this honor also to the Indians. Two names deserve special mention when we speak of Moslem algebra: Al-Khwarizmi (d. about 840) wrote treatises on astronomy, the Hindu method of calculation, algebra, and arithmetic, while the famous poet Omar Khayyam (d. 1123?) advanced even beyond Al-Khwarizmi in regard to equations. Where the latter dealt only with quadratics, Omar Khayyam devoted much of his treatise on algebra to cubic equations.

**Moslem geography.** Although the Moslems were synthesists rather than originators in science as a whole, they did make some important contributions of their own to the science of geography. Trade and the administration of a far-flung empire made imperative an accurate knowledge of lands. From the ninth to the fourteenth century a voluminous geographical literature was written in Arabic. In the first half of the ninth century Greek treatises were translated. Maps of the world were made during the tenth century, the first of them showing Mecca in the center, just as early medieval Christian cartographers were inclined to allot this position of honor to Jerusalem.

The tenth and eleventh centuries witnessed studies by scholars on climate, while a vogue of descriptive geography arose. In the eleventh century the mathematical aspect of geography was stressed when one scientist began to make tables of latitudes and longitudes. Al-Idrisi (1099-1154), was a geographer at the court of the Christian ruler Roger II of Sicily. He tried to synthesize preceding geographical knowledge, to reconcile descriptive and astronomical geography, and to formulate prin-



ciples of a scientific nature. He may possibly have conceived of the earth as a sphere. Yaqut (1175-1229) is noted for having compiled a large geographical dictionary (1228), in which all names are listed in alphabetical order. Certainly the geographical knowledge of the Moslems was far superior to that of any people in Christendom during the Middle Ages.

**Arabic poetry.** Arabic literature is prolific, yet it is little read by westerners as a rule, perhaps because of the traditional difference between westerners and easterners in matters of style and subject matter. Long before Mohammed was born, Arabia had produced hundreds of genuine poets with an original gift for story-telling. The Prophet himself was an excellent bard. To us, Omar Khayyam is the most familiar Persian poet. His *Rubāiyāt* is world-famous because of the musical (though not over-accurate) translation by Edward Fitzgerald. Here are some stanzas from the poem which will indicate its beautiful imagery, gentle pessimism, and frank hedonism:

O threats of Hell and Hopes of Paradise!  
One thing at least is certain—*This* Life flies;  
One thing is certain and the rest is Lies;  
The Flower that once has blown for ever dies.

Strange, is 'it not? that of the myriads who  
Before us pass'd the door of Darkness through,  
Not one returns to tell us of the Road,  
Which to discover we must travel too.

We are no other than a moving row  
Of Magic Shadow-shapes that come and go  
Round with the Sun-illuminated Lantern held  
In Midnight by the Master of the Show;

But helpless Pieces of the Game He plays  
Upon his Chequer-board of Nights and Days;  
Hither and thither moves, and checks, and  
slays,  
And one by one back in the Closet lays.

The Moving Finger writes; and, having writ,  
Moves on: nor all your Piety nor Wit  
Shall lure it back to cancel half a Line,  
Nor all your Tears wash out a Word of it.

And that inverted Bowl they call the Sky,  
Whereunder crawling coop'd we live and die,  
Lift not your hands to *It* for help—for *It*  
As impotently moves as you or I.<sup>18</sup>

**Moslem prose.** The piece of Moslem prose literature most familiar to western readers is the *Arabian Nights*. It is a collection of vivid tales, supposedly recounted by a vizier's daughter to a king as a means of preventing him from slaying Moslem brides the morning following their marriage. Altogether the story-teller takes a thousand and one nights to relate her engrossing stories, each tale filled with suspense. The collection covers many aspects of Moslem social life. While often frankly erotic, these tales are at once fascinating and brilliant and have influenced later literary patterns. As a matter of record, when the lovely story-teller was through, the king not only decided to forego the custom of putting Moslem brides to death, but made her his wife and queen.

Almost unknown to westerners are the Moslems' histories. Within the first eleven hundred years of Islam about six hundred historians had delved into the past and written accounts. Some of their treatises are indeed outstanding, such as the *Chronicle of Tabari* which runs to the year A.H. 302 (that is, 924 A.D., because the Mohammedans begin their calendar with 622, the year of the Hegira). The *Chronicle* occupies almost eight thousand pages, of which over a thousand deal with pre-Islamic events. Historical criticism was a strong point with the Moslems, because they were so keenly interested in the accuracy of the Koran and all other writings concerning the Prophet. They specialized in three main fields: biographies of Mohammed and other Islamic figures of importance, accounts of the spread of Mohammedanism, and world histories. Besides histories, Moslem scholars wrote dictionaries, grammars, and studies on philology, while in the fourteenth century they compiled a dictionary of national biography in twenty-five volumes.

**Philosophy.** Philosophy was also a favorite Moslem subject, although it was borrowed from the civilizations which the Moslems overran or was influenced in large measure by Greek ideas. Like the medieval Christian philosophers, Moslem thinkers largely concerned themselves with applying Aristotelian principles to religious problems as a means of bolstering up orthodox creeds, and we find many prominent philosophers attempting to reconcile reason with faith.

Avicenna, the physician, wrote commentaries



THE MOSQUE OF KAZENNAIN, BAGDAD

on Aristotle and his own Moslem predecessors, which were translated into Latin and had a far-reaching influence upon European thought. Moses Maimonides (1135-1204) was a Spanish Jew living under Moorish rule whose learning made him perhaps the greatest Jewish philosopher of the Middle Ages. Another Spaniard, Ibn Rushd, better known as Averroës (about 1126-1198), was the most profound commentator on Aristotle in the Moslem world and had the greatest effect of any Moslem philosopher upon European thought. His theology was based on the belief that conflict between philosophy and revealed truth as enshrined in the Koran was unthinkable.

**Art.** The place of art in Mohammedan civilization was not particularly strong, owing to certain religious restrictions. Because the Prophet feared the return of idol-worship, sculpture and pictorial art were absolutely forbidden, although manuscript illustration developed in later periods. Music likewise received scant favor, because its only religious use was in chanting the Koran. Dancing was discouraged. But the Mohammedan love of splendor was gratified by the lavish use of ornament in their architecture and the adornment of private dwellings with sumptuous silks, jewels, fine rugs, and vessels inlaid with gold and silver.

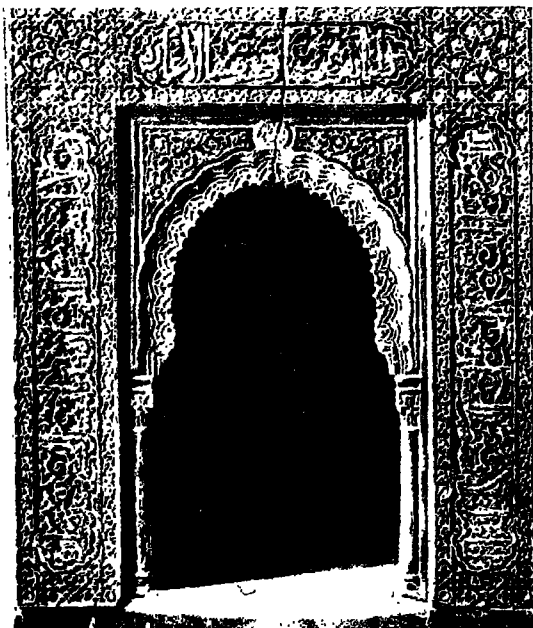
**Persian influence in art.** Moslem art owed what originality it had mostly to Persia. The brilliant Sassanid era in Persia (226-641) had

produced architecture, sculpture, and richly decorative minor arts. The Sassanid love of decorative animal figures remained an influence throughout Moslem art.

It is interesting to note the extent of Persian influence on non-Moslem peoples. The Japanese have in a shrine at Nara a silken banner of Persian design which dates back to the ninth century. It is said that Charlemagne himself was buried in a Persian shroud, and Tamerlane's tomb was designed by a Persian architect. Rugs on the floors of many homes today are Persian in motif.

**Architecture.** The two fields in which the Moslems excelled were architecture and the decorative arts, the latter developing as a compensation for the religious ban on pictorial art. As time went on, an original style of architecture evolved, so that the great mosques have such typical Moslem features as domes, horseshoe arches and minarets, slender towers from which the faithful are summoned to prayer. The Mosque of Kazennain, illustrated above, shows these features. Note the arcade of horseshoe arches to the far right, the domes, and the minarets. Different stylistic features can be observed in various parts of Islam. In Persia the mosques were usually built of brick and had high, round minarets and large domes, while those of the Moors usually had a flat roof.

The Moslems generally did not build on a monumental scale, but with the usual orien-



DOORWAY IN THE ALHAMBRA AT GRANADA

tal approach concentrated on appropriateness and beauty of detail. Other contributions were their use of color and of glazed tile.

Besides the mosques, the Moslems built large palaces, of which the most famous is the Alhambra at Granada in Spain. It is a fine example of Moslem architecture in a conquered country. The Spanish interpretation of the Moslem tradition was particularly delicate and elegant. Intricate details, like those of the doorway illustrated, were used throughout, always with restraint. Other examples of Moslem architecture, such as the Taj Mahal (page 518), based largely on Persian motifs, are to be found in India.

**Decoration.** The decorative skill of the Mohammedan artists was highly developed. Restricted in their subject matter, craftsmen conceived beautiful patterns from flowers, while geometrical figures were used to develop graceful, curving patterns. An outstanding feature of ornamentation was the use of Arabic inscriptions. The beauty of the letters



MESOPOTAMIAN POTTERY

of this language made it adaptable to intricate ornamentation on mosque walls and the sides of urns. Tiles and mosaics were used with becoming effect to produce the lavish and conventionalized Moslem patterns. This reveals oriental concentration on the more abstract elements of art, such as line and pattern, rather than on western interests such as the scientific and realistic use of modeled forms, perspective, and atmosphere.

Moslem decorative skill found expression also in such other fields as carpet and rug making, brass work, and the famous steel products with gold inlays. Persian pottery has simple design and beautiful decoration. The dish above shows plant and animal motifs which were used instead of the forbidden human figure. Note the manner in which the design is stylized and the figure distorted to fit the circular pattern. In the arts that the Moslems found open to them they improved upon their predecessors; their work is not large or grand but has a pleasing delicacy. Islamic art has modified western art, especially by richness of design.

### *Summary*

We have now briefly traced the development of Mohammedanism as a world religion and the rise of Islam as a great religious, social, political, and economic institution that spread to three continents. In addition to noting the phenomenal growth of the

vast empire, we have witnessed the richness of Islam's cultural contributions. The Moslems were especially gifted in medicine, mathematics, and geography among the sciences, in poetry and historical writing in the field of literature, in commentaries on Aristotle in philosophy, and in architecture and the decorative arts. The unity of Moslem thought was preserved by the universal use of Arabic as the one medium of expression, a medium which was at once clear, concise, poetic, and adaptable to the most technical scientific terminology. But we should not forget that Moslem intellectual life was the product of a genius for synthesis of varying cultures rather than one of original contributions.

The influence of Mohammedan civilization upon the culture of Europe was significant. Although the Byzantine empire, Syria, and Sicily were important, the great intermediary was Spain, situated in Europe yet possessing outstanding Moorish and Jewish scholars. Learned Jews translated Arabic treatises on Greek and Moslem science into Latin. Beginning about the eleventh century and continuing for the next 150 years, scholars gathered at Narbonne, Marseilles, and Toledo for the all-important task of translation. During these years they made available to Europe the scholarship and scientific writings of the Moslems. Aristotle was introduced to Europe in Latin through Spain. The great diffusion of Greek and Arabic knowledge, more or less completed by 1300, was a tremendous factor in the revival of classical learning and the coming of the Renaissance.

Why, one may ask, has Mohammedan civilization in modern times failed to retain its cultural supremacy? One reason was the influx of semibarbarous peoples into Islamic lands during the Middle Ages. Another was the stagnation that accrued from a too rigid interpretation of the Koran, so that a ban was placed on material change and progress. Still another reason was the corrupt and despotic rule of such Moslem dynasties as the Ottomans in Turkey, who destroyed all progressive political and economic movements. But a new day is at hand for modern Islam. The Moslems have amply proved that they have the intellectual and administrative gifts to make themselves a great people, and the rejuvenation of Turkey after the First World War under the able guidance of the late Mustapha Kemal Ataturk has indicated a possible road for the modern descendants of Mohammed the Prophet.

## MEDIEVAL INDIA: 540 B.C.—1400 A.D.

### Northern India

540-326 B.C. 326	Magadha empire Alexander invades India	Barrier between east and west broken: communication
	Greco-Indian kingdoms established	Greek influence on art Hellenistic culture flourishes
322-185	Maurya dynasty: Chandragupta Maurya Contact with Seleucid empire	Megasthenes' report on Pataliputra, capital
273-232	Reign of Asoka	Buddhism flourishes, expands Pillar edicts and <i>stupas</i>
c. 1-220 A.D.	Kushan empire	Active contact with Rome Creation of <i>Mahayana</i> Buddhism Rich literary developments
320-647 375-413	Golden age of the Guptas Zenith reached under Chandragupta II	Age of great drama Kalidasa's <i>Shakuntala</i> Sudraka's <i>Little Clay Cart</i> Fables and fairy stories: <i>Panchatantra</i> Beautiful sculpture and painting Astronomical and mathematical advances
	National unity approached	Aryabhata, Brahmagupta Medical progress: Sushruta Hinduism preferred to Buddhism
413-606 606-647 647-c. 800	Period of confusion Harsha reunites northern India temporarily Age of Rajputs	

### Deccan

225 B.C.-225 A.D. 550-750 608-642 1318	Andhra dynasty Chalukya dynasty Reign of Pulakesin II Mohammedans end rule of Hindus	Prakrit literature Kailasa temple
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### Tamil Land

10th century 14th century	Chola kingdom Vijayanagar kingdom	Rich trade with Roman empire
1175-1450 8th century 1187-1206	Mohammedan conquest of India First encounter Mohammed Ghorî overruns lower Indus valley, Punjab	Cruel persecution of Hinduism
1206-1388 1398	Moslem power strengthened: Gughluk, Ferozshah Invasion by Tamerlane	

## CHAPTER 10

# *The Hindu Triumph*



OUR first discussion of Indian civilization took us from Paleolithic times through the age of Buddha (563-483 B.C.). It is now our purpose to resume the story where we left off so that we can obtain a continuous picture of India's cultural evolution down to the sixteenth century.

It is a fascinating period of Indian history which we are about to discover. We see the reckless and audacious Alexander the Great march into western India, pushing aside all opposition until conquered by the fears of his own veteran soldiers. Then we watch the rise of a splendid native dynasty, its rule climaxed by the reign of one of the most enlightened monarchs the world has yet seen, Asoka. The panorama of historical events quickly shifts; dynasties rise and fall, the land is harried by invaders, while one religion displaces another in popular favor. And as the centuries elapse, Indian civilization is continually enriched by the contributions of mathematicians, scientists, artists, and philosophers.

Even more important, perhaps, is the accretion of a thousand and one time-defying customs by which India's social and economic life is still governed. As we read the following pages, let us keep always in mind the fact that modern Indian society lives largely according to a pattern whose principal elements existed during medieval times. Such a realization will make us all the more conscious of the antiquity of the India of Mahatma Gandhi and, at the same time, the modernity of that country even as far back as the age of Asoka.

The period we are about to discuss witnesses not only the flowering of Hindu civilization but also the invasion of Islamic culture (whose rapid spread throughout Africa,

Europe, and Asia we noted in the last chapter). Therefore we shall discover the presence in medieval India of two great cultural streams, Hindu and Mohammedan. As their names indicate, both cultures were the products of religious movements. Hinduism was established first in India, and the faith of Mohammed was imposed by force. In a future chapter we shall see the superimposition of yet another culture upon India, the occidental as administered by the British, although that culture is politico-economic and not religious in its nature.

Indian civilization is an imperfectly blended society in which Hindu and Moslem find little appreciation for the religion and society of each other and can agree only in their common aim to free India of occidental subjugation. We need to understand the historical development of India prior to the coming of the British if we are to comprehend the many complex problems confronting the great subcontinent today. Similarly, we must acquaint ourselves with medieval Indian culture and customs if we are to appreciate the extraordinary social pattern of modern India.

### *Early Hindu India (483 B.C.-320 A.D.)*

**Rise of the Magadha empire.** Early Buddhist literature tells us that there were some sixteen states or tribal territories in northern India at the time of the rise of Buddhism. Of these the two most important were Magadha in the eastern corner of India and Kosala southwest of Magadha. About 540 B.C. the Magadhas began to take control, finally absorbing completely the kingdom of Kosala. In 413 B.C. there arose a dynasty known as the Nine Nandas, and one of the nine was reigning over Magadha when Alexander the Great descended upon India in 326 B.C. Alexander was told that the Nanda had an army of 200,000 infantry, 20,000 cavalry, 2000 chariots, and 3000 war elephants, but no battle ever developed, because Alexander's soldiers refused to march so far east into unknown territory.

**Alexander's march to India.** We will recall how the young and ambitious Alexander had set out in 334 B.C. to conquer with a few thousand loyal Macedonians the mightiest power of that time, the far-flung Persian empire, whose suzerainty extended even to the valley of the Indus. In the next three years Alexander had conquered Asia Minor, Syria, Egypt, and Persia, had defeated Darius in three pitched battles, and had made himself master of the western world. He then pushed farther eastward, defeating mountain tribes en route.

In February, 326 B.C., Alexander crossed the Indus and was hospitably received by the ruler of the region. Alexander's Indian journey is

traced on the map on the opposite page. There Alexander was amazed to see customs new to him, such as the throwing of the dead to vultures and the offering of young girls for sale in the market place by fathers too poor to provide a dowry. The naked ascetics whom he saw in the outskirts of the city practicing strange penances perhaps reminded Alexander of the famous cynic whom he had encountered once in Athens, Diogenes of the tub, searching for an honest man.

Continuing eastward, the young Macedonian general encountered a great Indian army. Through brilliant strategy Alexander won the day and was able to push on to the east. He hoped to reach the empire of Magadha in order that he might subjugate it also, but his weary, homesick soldiers refused.

Before retracing his steps Alexander built twelve altars to commemorate his most easterly site. He had prepared a fleet of some 2000 vessels, and he now embarked his army with the purpose of sailing down the Indus, annexing the country through which he passed. After much fighting on the way, he reached the head of the Indus delta. A portion of the army had been sent home earlier. Another part under Alexander's own command marched along the coast to the Persian Gulf, and a third with the fleet returned home by water.

The land trip was difficult because of the terrible deserts which had to be crossed, while the tidal bore of the Indus River wrought

havoc among the ships. The spectacle of a school of whales brought fear and trembling to iron-nerved Macedonian soldiers, who infinitely preferred the terrors of the battlefield to those of unknown waters. After their exciting adventures all sections of the army arrived at Susa in April-May, 324 B.C.

Within thirteen months Alexander died, and the empire he had built in such meteoric fashion began to disintegrate. By 321 B.C. Alexander's domain in the Punjab had completely disappeared, mainly because of the efforts of youthful Chandragupta Maurya, one of the most romantic figures in all Indian history, whom we shall soon discuss as the ruler of a splendid civilization.

**Effects of Alexander's invasion.** Thus perished Alexander's dream of world dominion, a dream so brief that there is not a single mention of his invasion in any contemporary Indian literature. Yet Alexander spread Greek culture wherever he went. We shall later see, for example, that there was a period in sculpture when the Buddha was portrayed in a Greco-Indian style.

There were other effects of Alexander's invasion. The wall of separation between east and west was broken, and communication by land and sea was shown to be feasible. Various Greek kingdoms were established in western Asia, such as the Greco-Bactrian monarchy, flourishing by the middle of the third century B.C. Bactria had been an important satrapy of the Persian kings. It was wealthy, for into it converged the great trade routes of central Asia. When Alexander pushed eastward, Bactria fell before his onslaught, and he made it an important Macedonian settlement. The kingdom became a center for the dissemination of Greek culture, especially during the second and first centuries B.C., when ambitious Bactrian rulers pushed eastward and annexed territories in western India.

Some authorities have pointed out that Buddhism was probably modified by knowledge of the Greek gods and that the use of images in later Buddhism may have been a result of the Greek example. However, the Greek influence never changed the basic structure of either Indian society or religion in India. This was due in no small measure to the fact that Greek influences were confined to northwest India, where intercourse with the



Greek-Persian principalities was most prevalent. Not for centuries was intercourse a common matter between Hindustan and the Deccan or Tamil Land to the south.

**Chandragupta Maurya.** In 322 B.C. a new era dawned for India, for in that year a great empire sprang up. Magadha at that time was ruled by an unpopular Nanda king. Chandragupta Maurya, a young man who is said to have met Alexander, gathered a robber force from the north and seized the kingdom, aided by a wily Brahman adviser. In the next twenty-four years Chandragupta established his rule over all northern India. He may be called the first emperor of India, although his power did not extend into the far south. He began the Maurya dynasty, which endured until about 184 B.C.

**India as seen by Megasthenes.** About 305 B.C. Seleucus, the general who inherited Alexander's eastern empire, crossed the Indus in an effort to regain Alexander's Indian conquests, but Chandragupta proved too strong for him, and he had to retreat. Seleucus ceded to the Indian emperor lands which he held west of the Indus. A few years later Seleucus sent an envoy called Megasthenes to the court of Chandragupta at Pataliputra. Thanks to the detailed and scholarly reports of Megasthenes, we have a very clear picture of these early Indian times.

Pataliputra, the capital city, was a splendid center of about eighteen square miles, with



massive wooden city walls containing sixty-four gates and 570 towers. The streets were laid out according to plan, and there were inns, theaters, gaming houses, bazaars, and two- and three-story houses. In the center of the city stood the royal palace surrounded by a walled park containing tame peacocks, fish, and ornamental trees.

In the midst of this wealth the emperor tended eagerly to his state duties. The army of perhaps 600,000 men was under the supervision of a well-organized war office of six boards. In other ways the government was ably administered. The empire was divided into three provinces, each of which was governed by a viceroy who had at his side a civil service of commissioners and officials.

All land belonged to the state, and agriculture was the main source of wealth. Irrigation was important, and a special department in charge of it levied water rates upon all irrigated lands. Crop rotation was practiced, and Megasthenes tells us that famines were almost unknown. There were officers in charge of forests and mines, and others whose duty it was to collect taxes on crops and on goods sold.

There were many towns, all connected by excellent roads, which included milestones and rest houses and over which royal couriers maintained a postal service. Trade was cosmopolitan, and the bazaars of Pataliputra displayed goods from southern India, China, Mesopotamia, and the Greek cities of Asia Minor. Indian ships sailed the Indian Ocean to the Tigris and to Arabia, and Indian goods were carried overland to Europe.

Megasthenes was struck by the similarity of the Brahman philosophy to that taught by the Greeks:

"In many points their teaching agrees with that of the Greeks—for instance that the world has a beginning and an end in time, and that its shape is spherical; that the Deity, who is its Governor and Maker, interpenetrates the whole; that the first principles of the universe are different, but that water is the principle from which the order of the world has come to be; that besides the four elements, there is a fifth substance (akasa, ether) of which the heavens and the stars are made; that the earth is the center of the universe. About generation of the soul, their teaching shows parallels to the Greek doctrines, and on many other matters. Like Plato, too, they interweave

fables about the immortality of the Soul and the judgments inflicted in the other world and so on."<sup>1</sup>

Justice was administered fairly but sternly in both civil and criminal cases. Theft was ordinarily punished by mutilation, and torture was an accepted mode of extracting confessions from "those whose guilt is believed to be true." The Brahmins, because of their high social and political station, seem to have enjoyed special legal privileges. Slavery existed but was mild, and slaves could purchase their freedom. There were many amusements to please all classes. Hunting and gambling were enjoyed by the royal family, although these pastimes were condemned by the Brahmins. State feasts, caste festivals, strolling players, dancing and acting entertainments, and gay processions through the illuminated streets of the capital all added to the pleasure of living in the empire of Magadha.

*Life of the emperor.* Chandragupta was 'a splendid general and administrator; an alert thinker, and a colorful figure. He allied his empire with the fortunes of the Seleucus family, appears to have married one of its princesses, and fostered a friendly exchange of information between the two empires. He lived in great state, surrounded by Greek intimates, and his court was run according to Persian ceremonial, factors which by no means endeared the monarch to his Indian subjects. So great was the danger of conspiracy, in fact, that Chandragupta had to dwell in strict seclusion. He was surrounded by a bodyguard of women who cooked his food, served his wine, and in the evening carried him to his apartment where he was lulled to sleep by Indian music. He would even change bedrooms at night to thwart possible attempts on his life by Indian conspirators who are said to have dug tunnels under the palace walls.

Chandragupta lived in lavish state. His processions included elephants decked in silver and gold, and four-horse chariots. Strabo, the noted geographer, tells us that, in such a procession, "then comes a great host of attendants in holiday dress, with golden vessels such as huge basins and goblets, six feet broad, tables, chairs of state, drinking vessels and lavers, all of Indian copper, and many of them set with jewels such as emeralds, beryls and Indian garnets; others bear robes embroidered in gold thread, and lead wild beasts, such as buffaloes,

leopards and tame lions, and rare birds in cages."<sup>2</sup>

**Bindusara.** In 298 B.C. Chandragupta was succeeded by his son Bindusara, of whom we know very little. However, we have a charming story about Bindusara's youth, which indicates the close cultural relations which existed between the Maurya and Seleucid rulers to the west at this time. Bindusara, writing to Seleucus in Syria, asked for a sample of Greek wine, some raisins, and a Sophist. In his reply Seleucus says he sends the wine with pleasure, but that "it isn't good form among the Greeks to trade in philosophers."<sup>3</sup>

**Asoka.** Bindusara in turn was succeeded by his son Asoka in 273 B.C. Asoka is one of the outstanding rulers in history. He was one of the few early kings who pursued the arts of peace more diligently than the arts of war; his first military campaign was also his last. In 261 B.C. Asoka went to war with Kalinga, one of the last independent states, situated on the Bay of Bengal to the south. The Kalinga inhabitants stubbornly resisted his invasion, and a war of extermination followed, culminating in a victory for Asoka. Hundreds of thousands were either killed or carried away captive. Asoka's empire now included nearly all of India to the edge of Tamil Land (see map). But the cruelty of the campaign horrified the king, and he resolved never again to commit such acts of butchery. About this time Asoka was converted to Buddhism, and his conversion may well have helped turn him away from warfare. From that time forward he resolved to govern only by the Law of Piety or Duty (*dharma*), for "the conquest of the Law," he said, "is alone a conquest full of delight."

**Asoka and religion.** As the years elapsed, Asoka became more deeply religious. Everywhere throughout his empire he had edicts carved upon stone pillars, some of which still stand today. These edicts were a practical application of the teachings of Buddha, and stressed compassion, kindness to all living things, truth, purity, and liberality. Asoka believed in complete religious toleration, and although he himself was a devout Buddhist he liberally aided the Brahmins, Jains, and other sects. He relaxed the harsh laws of his grandfather, Chandragupta, and gave his governors wide powers in pardoning prisoners. He abolished royal hunting, forbade animal sacrifices, and ate no meat himself.

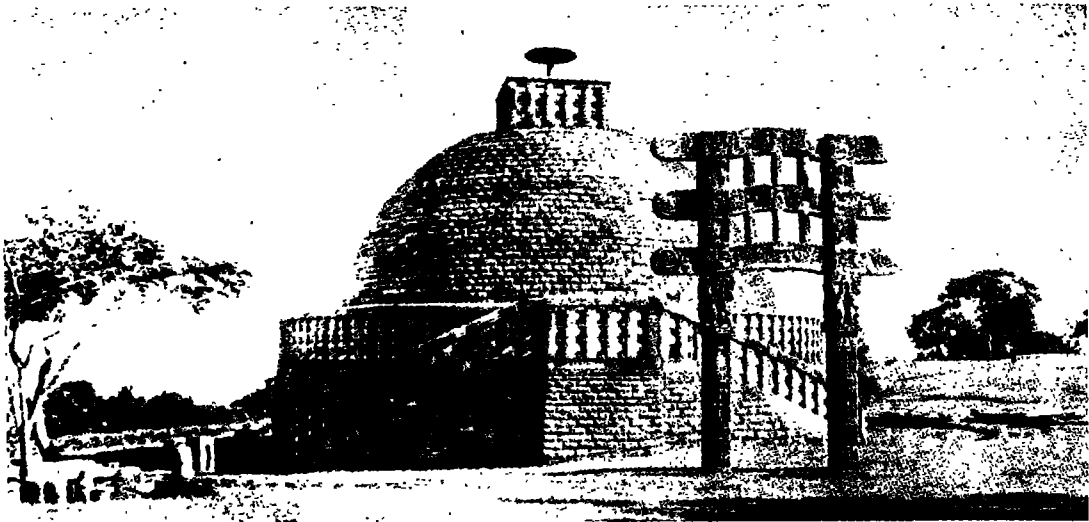


Asoka sent Buddhist missionaries into distant lands to teach the gospel of salvation and equality. The effect of their missionary work still endures. He sent teachers to the Himalayan regions, the Tamil kingdoms, Ceylon, Burma, and the Greek monarchies of Syria, Egypt, Cyrene, and Macedonia. Thus he transformed Buddhism from a small Indian sect to a powerful religion and made its influence felt on three continents (see map, page 261). His missionary work was especially successful in Ceylon (where he sent his brother), and in Ceylon today we find Buddhism in its purest form. Asoka was to Buddhism what Paul was to Christianity—the great propagator of religion.

**Asoka's pillar edicts.** The inscriptions on Asoka's pillars not only show that the art of calligraphy was highly developed but indicate that writing was commonly used for practical purposes throughout the empire. The inscriptions (written in the vernacular, not in Sanskrit) would have been useless unless reading and writing were quite common, at any rate among the officials instructed to make known to every citizen the edicts of the monarch.

It is known that Asoka was highly practical in his charities, that he desired all his subjects to possess the attribute of charity, to him one of the highest forms of morality. By the promulgation of an edict such as the following, Asoka hoped to instill in his subjects a high sense of morality:

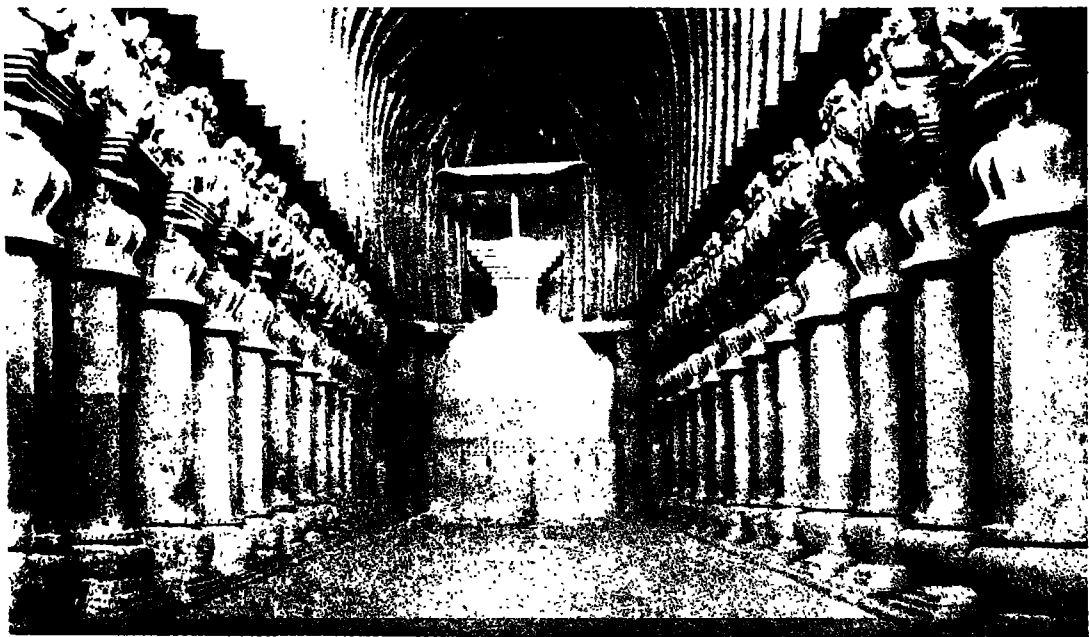
"Everywhere has His Sacred and Gracious Majesty the King made two kinds of curative



A BUDDHIST STUPA, SHOWING CARVED GATEWAYS, AT SANCHI, INDIA

arrangements, to wit, curative arrangements for men and curative arrangements for beasts. Medicinal herbs also, medicinal for man and . . . beast, wherever they were lacking, have been imported and planted; roots also and fruits, wherever they were lacking, everywhere have been imported and planted. On the roads both wells have been dug and trees planted for the enjoyment of man and beast."<sup>4</sup>

*Architecture in the time of Asoka.* Undoubtedly Indian art had a rich history prior to the days of Asoka, for the remains of the artistic works produced in his reign show maturity everywhere. But knowledge is lacking of pre-Asokan art, and so our history of Indian art really begins with his reign. In Asoka's reign stone was used for building instead of wood. These stone buildings retained the



THE CHAITYA HALL OF THE KARLI CAVE TEMPLE, NEAR BOMBAY, INDIA

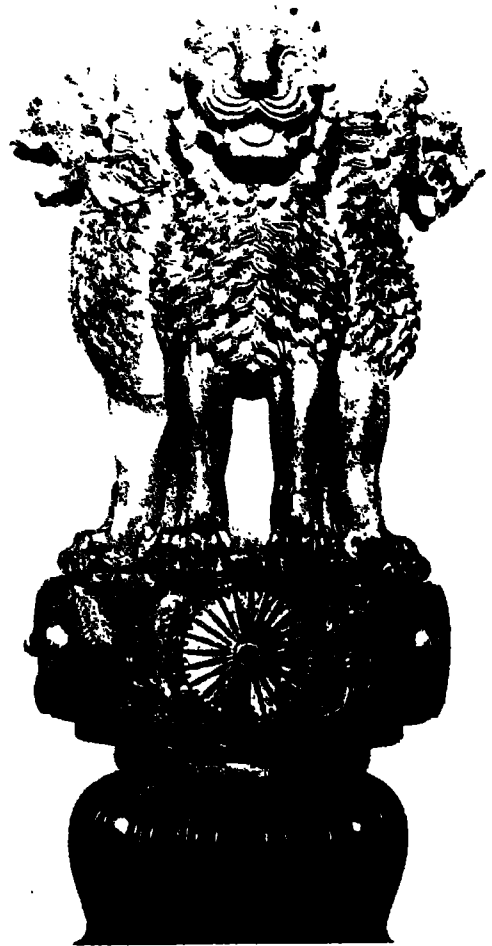
wood type of construction, however, translated into stone. The stone roofs were carved to look like wooden beams.

Of particular interest are his *stupas* (pictured on the opposite page), which were used to enshrine the relics of Buddhist saints or to mark a holy spot. They were domes, originally made of earth but later of brick covered with earth. They were surrounded by a rail and four gateways of stone, covered with carving like that in the picture on page 81. On the top of the dome was a boxlike structure surmounted by an umbrella, the Indian emblem of sovereignty symbolizing Buddha's princely birth. Later, when Buddhism spread to other countries, the *stupa* type of architecture went along, and its gateway was widely copied.

Dating from this period are rock-cut temples, whose form was also developed from earlier wood construction. The temple at Karli shows the typical copying of wood construction. Although the temples were cut from solid rock and needed no structural elements, they were made to look like earlier free-standing wooden structures. At the end of the nave can be seen the *chaitya*, the early symbol of Buddha. (Note its similarity to the *stupa*.) On the entrance wall was placed a large horseshoe window which provided dramatic lighting for the *chaitya*. These buildings as well as the *stupas* were richly carved with decorations.

**Early Indian sculpture.** Sculpture in early India decorated the *stupas* and cave temples. Popular subjects were Buddhist scenes, like those on the Sanchi *stupa* gates (page 81), and animals, such as those on the capitals in the Karli temple and on Asoka's pillars. Love of decoration was evident, and although later periods showed great technical advance, early Indian artists did excellent work. The capitals in several civilizations reveal interesting differences. The columns at Karli and Asoka's lion pillar show bell-shaped capitals surmounted by animals. Compare these with the lotus-bud capitals of Karnak (page 45), the intricately decorated Byzantine capital (page 228), and the classic orders of Greece (pages 138 and 139). Given the same problem in architectural decoration, sculptors of different civilizations treated it in distinctive fashion.

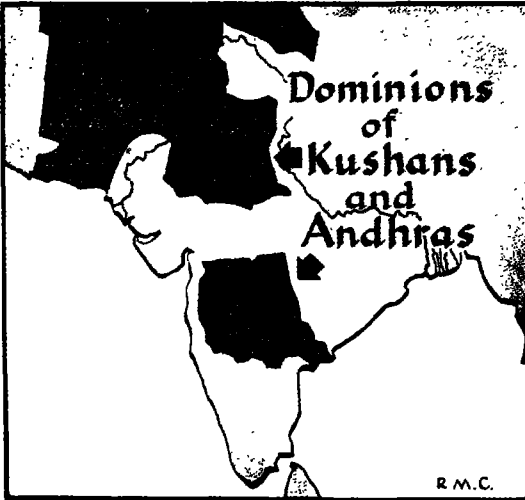
**Invasions.** About 232 B.C. Asoka died, and his empire began almost immediately to disintegrate. In 185 B.C. the Maurya dynasty came to an end, and a new dynasty, which held sway



*The lion-crowned capital of one of Asoka's pillars illustrates culture diffusion in its blending of Near-Eastern and Indian conventions. Assyrian lion subjects with stylized manes and claws (compare with page 61) were transmitted to Indians of the Punjab through the Persians. The bell-shaped capital, wheel symbol, and composition are Indian.*

for over a century, fostered the return of northern India to Brahmanism and the persecution of the Buddhists. Invaders now began to overrun the Punjab from the northwest, and in the first century B.C. chaos descended.

Interesting developments occurred on the northwest frontier. In the second and first centuries B.C. the Greeks, Syrians, and Scythians who invaded and conquered the western Punjab established a Greco-Bactrian culture which featured Greek style in sculpture and Persian style in architecture. About this time various nomadic tribes of central Asia (prob-



ably searching for a change of climate) swept south and east, overwhelming the Greek kingdom of Bactria. By the first century A.D. the chief of the most important clan, the Kushans, had conquered the Indo-Greek princes on the frontier and established himself as master of a large part of northwestern India.

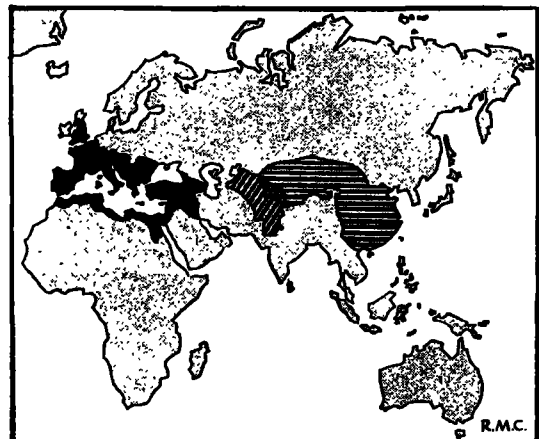
**Kanishka's Kushan empire.** The most out-



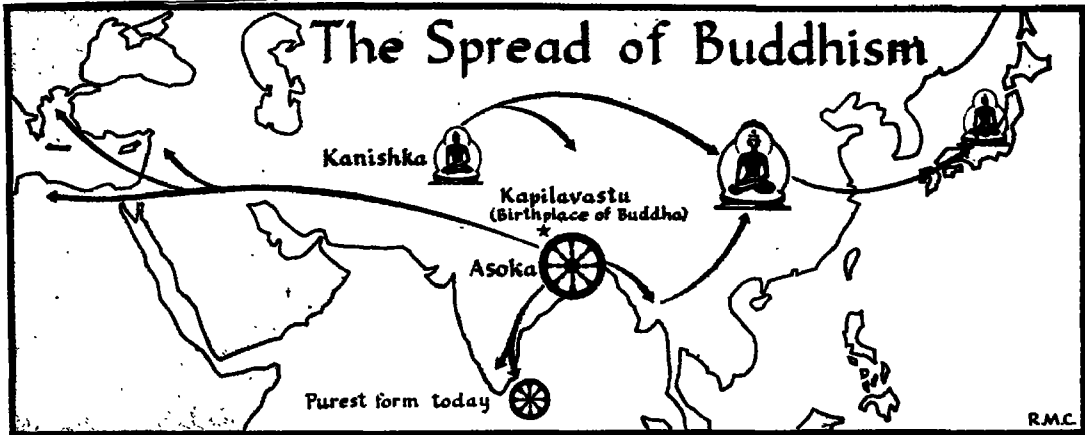
A Tibetan lama holds his rosary and the prayer wheel whose turning wafts his prayers heavenward. He belongs to one of a multiplicity of complex sects which grew out of mingled Buddhism and Christianity.

standing Kushan king was Kanishka, who came to the throne about 120 A.D. He ruled all northwest India, perhaps as far south as the Narbada River, and certain mountain kingdoms to the north (see map at left). Under him the arts and sciences flourished. Fine buildings were built at Taxila and the capital, Peshawar, and great advances were made in medicine. The Kushan empire was most friendly with the Romans, and an Alexandrian sea captain who visited the coast of India tells of the trade between the two peoples; spices and silks left the ports of India to be exchanged for Roman gold coins, Greek wines, and "choice girls for the royal harems."

**Mahayana Buddhism.** King Kanishka was converted to Buddhism, an important event in the development of the religion. He called a council of five hundred monks from which arose the *Mahayana* (Greater Vehicle) school of Buddhism. *Mahayana* Buddhism is not an individualistic philosophy like that taught by Buddha but an emotional religion full of myth and ceremony. Buddha is made into a Bodhi-sattva (in art represented sometimes as a man, sometimes as a woman), an exalted being who renounced nirvana to save mankind. *Mahayana*, or northern, Buddhism spread along the trade routes of the north and became the Buddhism of China, Tibet, and Japan (see map, page 261). *Hinayana*, or southern, Buddhism has persisted in Ceylon. Kanishka, like Asoka, was instrumental in making Buddhism a world-wide faith.



The Roman empire (black), the Kushan dominions in India (oblique stripe), and the Han empire in China (horizontal stripe) are shown here about the year 100 A.D.



While the adoption of Buddhism by Kanishka had very beneficial effects in the matter of its spread to other countries, in the long run it probably served to lessen its popularity in the land of its birth. Buddhism had accepted the Greeks and Kushans and allowed itself to be associated with them. Hinduism, on the other hand, rejected foreigners as outcasts and hence came to be regarded as more truly Indian than Buddhism.

**Kushan art.** The rise of the *Mahayana* school of Buddhism was a great impetus to the development of Buddhist art. The followers of the *Hinayana* school did not worship Buddha as a deity, nor did they sculpt him, but rather venerated relics and used symbolic representation in their religious art. However, in Kushan times many statues of Buddha were created in India. Some artists were influenced by Greek models. The Kushans built many stupas and churches out of solid rock.

**Kushan drama and literature.** The origin of

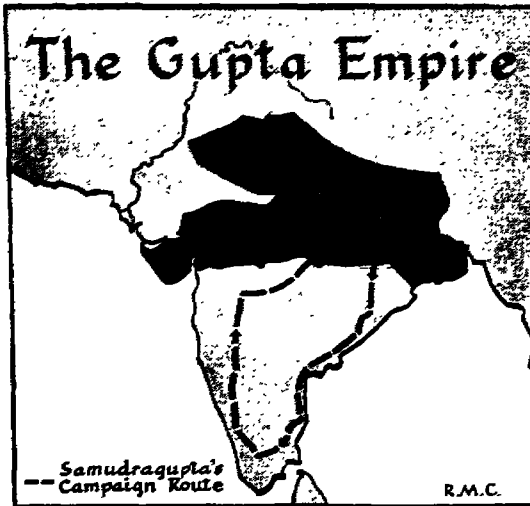
Indian drama is obscure, but it seems to have developed considerably during the Kushan period. It may have been derived from the coalescence of epic legends and pantomimic art. The Sanskrit drama differed in many respects from that of the Greeks. It was never tragic, and all problems of grief, sorrow, and terror were dispelled by a happy ending. Indian drama had very little action. Another peculiar feature was its employment of different dialects according to the social status of the characters. Kings, Brahmans, and nobles spoke in Sanskrit, while women and social inferiors, according to unbreakable custom, had to converse in the vernacular.

Kushan culture declined with the break-up of the Kushan empire in 220 A.D. It had been one of the richest periods in Indian civilization. It was an age of intense literary and artistic output, due largely to Hellenistic influence, in which the drama, the court epic, and classical Sanskrit evolved.

### *The Golden Age of the Guptas (320-647)*

**The Gupta empire.** After the fall of the Kushan empire India underwent another period of comparative darkness. But in the early fourth century India entered upon the golden age of Hindu culture, the period of the Gupta empire. Then a Hindu rajah named Chandragupta I (no relation to the Chandragupta Maurya whom we have met before) established himself as ruler of the Ganges valley. In 319-320 he inaugurated the Gupta era by his coronation as King of Kings and the striking of coins in his own honor.

His son, Samudragupta, stands out as a real warrior and one of India's greatest rulers. During his fifty years on the throne he sent his armies in all directions until at the time of his death his empire stretched across northern India from the Himalayas down to the Narbada River (see map, page 262). His empire was the greatest in extent and power since the days of Asoka six centuries earlier. His son, Chandragupta II, extended his kingdom still farther to the west. The Gupta dynasty reached its zenith of power and splendor under the



rule of Chandragupta II (about 375-413 A.D.). India achieved its closest approximation to national unity during the reigns of Asoka, Chandragupta II, and Akbar, whom we shall meet in a later chapter.

We are indebted particularly to Fahien, a Chinese Buddhist pilgrim to India, for our knowledge of the reign of Chandragupta II. He informs us that the inhabitants were prosperous and contented, the cities abounded with hospitals to which the poor might go and receive medical aid and food gratuitously, no intoxicants were imbibed nor any meat eaten except by the pariahs, and even criminal offenders were given no corporal punishment but were merely fined.

**Gupta drama.** The Gupta period, especially during the fifth century, was the golden age of northern India. The most famous name in Indian poetry is that of Kalidasa, whose *Cycle of the Seasons* and epic *The Race of Raghu* stamp him as the greatest of the Sanskrit poets. He has likewise been termed the Indian Shakespeare because of his three superb dramas, of which *Shakuntala* is the most outstanding. This drama, despite its lack of action, which western audiences would consider a drawback, has many qualities which make it endure as a superlative play. The plot deals with the romance of a king and the daughter of a celestial nymph, named Shakuntala. The monarch meets the girl while hunting. He marries her, but the curse of an angry sage brings about a long separation. When fishermen find within a fish the ring

given to Shakuntala by the king, the lovers are reunited.

The play is filled with much beautiful imagery, at which Kalidasa excels, and is flavored with a deep tenderness as, for example, in the following lines, spoken by an old friend when the girl is about to leave her home:

My heart is touched with sadness when I think  
'Shakuntala must leave today'; my throat  
Is choked with flow of tears repressed; mine eyes  
Grow dim with pensiveness; but if the grief  
Of this old forest hermit is so great,  
How keen must be the pang a father feels  
When freshly parted from a cherished child!<sup>5</sup>

And as the girl walks through the forest, voices in the air utter,

Thy journey be auspicious; may the breeze,  
Gentle and soothing, fan thy cheek; may lakes  
All bright with lily cups delight thine eye;  
The sunbeams' heat be cooled by shady trees;  
The dust beneath thy feet the pollen be  
Of lotuses.<sup>6</sup>

*Shakuntala* is still extremely popular in India, and its excellence won the unstinted praise of the German literary genius Goethe.

A play contemporary with *Shakuntala* but quite different in its story is *The Little Clay Cart*, attributed to a king named Sudraka. The play is distinctive because it has vigor and action, and the characters are cleverly delineated. The plot is urban in scene and concerns the lives of a rich courtesan and a Brahman merchant brought to ruin by overgenerosity. The two eventually marry after many comic experiences.

*The Little Clay Cart* is rich in both descriptive and satirical passages. Here are the cynical words of one of the characters in the play:

Those men are fools, it seems to me,  
Who trust to women or to gold;  
For gold and girls, 'tis plain to see,  
Are false as virgin snakes and cold.

As fickle as the billows of the sea,  
Glowing no longer than the evening sky,  
A woman takes your gold, then leaves you free;  
You're worthless, like cosmetics, when you're dry.<sup>7</sup>

**Indian fables.** The age of the Guptas also witnessed important developments in one of the richest of all forms of Indian literature, the fable and fairy story. Often Indian epic poetry and drama are stereotyped; they deal with the same old legendary material over and over again, and only such figures as kings, heroic warriors, and unearthly women are praised. But in the rich folklore of India we find more interesting characters depicted as well—thieves, courtesans, selfish Brahmans, procuresses, and hypocritical monks. Added to these vivid characters are extraordinary situations involving feats of magic, strange beasts, and exotic worlds.

Indian fairy tales and fables constitute the most original element in the literature of that country, and the one which has had the most profound influence on the thought of other peoples. Through translation these fables have found their way all over Asia and Europe, and have even penetrated deep into Africa. The oldest fables are to be found in the *Mahabharata* (see page 73), while the most famous story book is the *Panchatantra*, written between 300 and 500. That classic was composed in Sanskrit for the definite purpose of instructing young rulers in the ways of political doctrine and correct government. Like other story books, the *Panchatantra* consists of a group of stories set within the pattern of a single narrative. The style of narration was borrowed by the Arabs when they composed their famous *Arabian Nights*, which also contains Indian fables.

Some of the most outstanding European storytellers have been indebted to Indian folklore. We find tales from India in the works of Boccaccio, Chaucer, La Fontaine, and Grimm, while many of these fables and stories have passed into oral tradition throughout Europe. We are all acquainted with the tale of the dog who welcomes his master home with blood-besmeared mouth. The master sees the cradle of his child overturned, thinks the mastiff has slain the baby, and in turn kills the dog. But soon he finds the child safe and a dead wolf lying by its side. The tale comes from the *Panchatantra*. The original differs slightly from the familiar story, growing out of local conditions and customs. In the Indian legend a Brahman leaves his child in the care of a mongoose, and when he returns home, he is greeted by the animal with blood on his

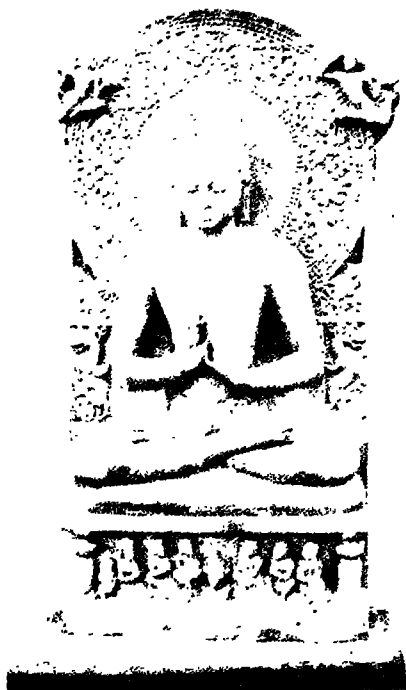
mouth. The Brahman slays the faithful creature, only to discover almost immediately a dead serpent by the cradle and the baby unharmed.

Other collections of fairy tales and fables grew up in India, and from them came the world-famous story of Sindbad, which eventually found its way into the *Arabian Nights*. India presents an unusually fertile soil for the creation of fable and folklore. The religions of that country have always stressed the unity of all life and the cycle of transmigration. Therefore it is not difficult to forget the difference between the animal and human kingdoms and to think of beasts acting like men and vice versa. Again, the tropical environment of the country presents a wealth of birds, animals, trees, fish, and flora, and the country abounds in a multitude of races, languages, and customs.

**Gupta art.** Gupta art also was of a high order of excellence. Like much of the great art of the western world, it is concerned not so much with the value of an object in itself as with its representation of Life Eternal. Although this religious art is full of unfamiliar Buddhist figures, it need not lack interest for a westerner. The Indian artist does not devote himself to depicting scenes which are transient or simply unusual. Rather he chooses subject matter which has a continuous pertinence, irrespective of changes in time and place. For example, the artist will show the Buddha attaining Enlightenment because although the event is supposed to have taken place over two thousand years ago, it is still an important symbol to every Buddhist believer. To understand Indian art one must forget the approach of the many western artists who have been primarily concerned with the representation of an object for its own sake.

Indian art has as its philosophy the depicting of super-physical values. And, owing to the relatively small number of these values, Indian artists specialized in restricted subject matter and formalized techniques. The restraint and grace characteristic of Gupta art can be seen in the Buddha of Sarnath (page 264). The sculptor here was not interested in a realistic portrait, but in expressing simply the dignity of his religion. A comparison with early Gothic sculpture (page 389) shows the same lack of interest in realism and a similar effect of dignity, less graceful in the northern work.





THE BUDDHA OF SARNATH

The Buddhist paintings at Ajanta have great beauty of line. The figures are very graceful, and a love of nature is evident throughout. Love of nature is typical of Indian art as a whole, while the rather elegant grace of the figures is representative of Buddhist art. The "Beautiful Bodhisattva" (page 265) is a detail from one of these frescoes. Although it is badly battered, the rhythmic repetition of the curving lines can be plainly seen. They are the earliest existing paintings (the group dates from the second century B.C. to the seventh century A.D.), but the earliest of them have a technical excellence which shows that there must have been a long period of development before them.

The fact that little Gupta architecture remains is to be explained largely by repeated invasions of Mohammedans, who seldom spared a Hindu building.

**Science.** Scholars have not yet decided how much Indian science was influenced by Greek and Arabic contributions, especially in mathematics and medicine. The most famous scientist of the period was the astronomer and

mathematician Aryabhata. He discussed, in verse, quadratic equations, sines, the value of  $\pi$ , eclipses, solstices and equinoxes, and the spherical shape of the earth and its daily revolution on its axis. His successor, Brahmagupta, systematized the astronomic knowledge of India. Other Indian astronomers made up a calendar of twelve months, each of thirty days, each day of thirty hours, inserting an intercalary month every five years. They also predicted eclipses accurately, calculated the moon's diameter, and expounded the theory of gravity.

Indian astronomy and mathematics were unequaled (except in geometry) by those of any ancient western people. Our Arabic numerals and the decimal system appear to have come originally from India. The numerals can be found on the rock edicts of Asoka (256 B.C.), while Aryabhata and Brahmagupta were using decimals long before the Arabs, Syrians, and Chinese had a chance to borrow them. Even the zero may have come from Indian sources. The mathematicians created the concept of a negative quantity (without which algebra could not exist), found the square root of 2, and solved complicated equations.

The Hindus were remarkably advanced in industrial chemistry, for they had discovered the secrets of calcination, distillation, and sublimation, the preparation of metallic salts and alloys, and the making of soap, glass, and cement. They were the finest temperers of steel in the world.

In medicine, the Gupta doctors were continuing the splendid tradition set down by Sushruta. Sushruta was surprisingly modern in his techniques, such as sterilizing a wound by fumigation, preparing for an operation, and stressing the need of dissection of dead bodies as essential in the training of surgeons. Like Hippocrates, Sushruta had a high moral standard. He maintained that the poor, widows, neighbors, travelers, friends, and priests should be treated without charge by the physician, who should look upon them as if they were his own relatives. Conversely, Sushruta stated that no medical aid should be extended to such persons as sinners, hunters, and fowlers.

In concluding our estimate of Indian science, it would be well to point out that scholars have not yet satisfactorily estimated how much Indian science was influenced by its con-

tacts with Greek and Arabic contributions, especially in mathematics and medicine.

**Religious developments.** The Gupta age witnessed important religious developments. Buddhism, which had received its greatest impetus from Asoka and Kanishka, was beginning to wane in power. Its decline was due both to the personal preference of the Gupta kings for Hinduism and to the growth of power of the orthodox Brahmins as a caste. We find now a renaissance of Hinduism taking place, greatly at the expense of Buddhism. In spite of the increasing influence of Hinduism, it was a period of full religious liberty for all sects. Religious tolerance was an outstanding characteristic of the Gupta period.

As we stated in a previous chapter, Hinduism is a complex faith. It adheres to the philosophy of the *Upanishads*, yet it is highly ritualistic and polytheistic. The Hindu sees in life three great processes everywhere: creation, preservation, and destruction. Therefore he worships a Trinity which embodies these aspects: Brahma the Creator, Vishnu the Preserver, and Shiva the Destroyer. Popular devotion is shared between the cults of Vishnu and Shiva, and many festivals are conducted annually in honor of each. Superstition early crept into Hinduism, however, and thousands of lesser deities, including cobras, parrots, and tigers, are worshiped. The cow has long been considered an object of veneration, because of its gentleness, its rich gift of milk, and its symbolism of the sacredness of all life.

Hinduism has remained the popular religious faith of the people of India. Today



THE "BEAUTIFUL BODHISATTVA," AJANTA FRESCO

seventy per cent of the population is Hindu, twenty-two per cent is Mohammedan, and a mere three per cent can be classed as Buddhist.

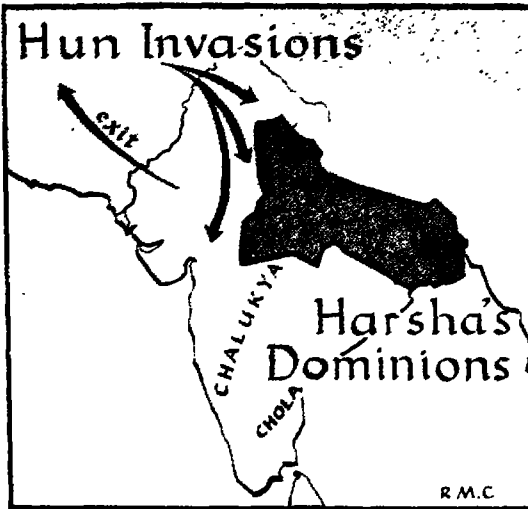
### *Northern, Central, and Southern India to the Moslem Invasion*

**Hun invasion of northern India.** With the death of Chandragupta II in 413, the Gupta empire began to break up. Huns invaded the Punjab at the end of the fifth century, just as their relatives were ravaging Europe under Attila, "The Scourge," and although they were prevented from advancing through eastern India by a confederacy of Hindu princes, they held control of north-western India and married natives.

**Harsha.** In the seventh century there were various states in the Ganges valley, all constantly at war with one another. Then a strong man arose, Harsha, rajah of one of the

northern kingdoms, who in the short space of six years (606-612) made himself master of much of the territory formerly ruled by the Guptas (see map, page 266). He was unable, however, to penetrate into the Deccan.

We are again indebted to a Chinese Buddhist pilgrim, this time Hsien Tsang, for our clear knowledge of the reign of Harsha. The learned foreign scholar spent eight of his fifteen years (630-645) in India within Harsha's dominions. He found the caste system well established. He reported the people as well behaved and law abiding, taxes light, the standard of living high, learning in high es-



teem, with thousands of students receiving instruction in grammar, mechanics, medicine, logic, and metaphysics, and the government excellently administered by the tireless Harsha. The king was a splendid example of the benevolent despot—a soldier and administrator, a patron of the arts, and himself a skilled poet and dramatist. Unfortunately Harsha left no heirs to continue his beneficent rule.

**The Rajputs.** With the death of Harsha in 647 northern India once more underwent an age of political confusion and change. During the next two centuries a new order or society arose, headed by clans of a people who called themselves Rajputs, or Sons of Kings. Today there are thirty-six Rajput clans, who claim to be descended from the Kshatriyas (the warrior caste) of the ancient epics, but they are in reality the descendants of central Asian tribes who migrated into the northwest areas of India in the fifth and sixth centuries. The newcomers married with the Hindus, promptly forgot their origins, and assumed the haughty privileges of the "blueblood" Hindus.

The Rajputs spent their time in patronizing the arts, especially the poetry of the court bards, and in exterminating one another. They had a code of chivalry not unlike that in medieval Europe. Youths were educated by means of epic stories, initiated at puberty into knight-hood, and taught to live according to a code which respected women, spared the fallen, and permitted no foul play.

**The Deccan.** We must remember that our study of Indian history has been confined so

far to northern India (Hindustan). The geography of the country made intercourse with the Deccan and the kingdoms of the Far South (Tamil Land) nearly impossible (see Chapter 3, page 70). Penetration of the Deccan from the north began about the seventh century B.C., but our earliest date in Deccan history is 256 B.C., when Asoka dispatched a Buddhist mission to the south. But the southern areas had developed a remarkable culture.

From 225 B.C. to 225 A.D. the Deccan was ruled by the Andhra dynasty, which governed it almost from sea to sea at the height of its power (see map, p. 260). The kingdom was divided into three provinces. Trade flourished in the hands of guilds similar to those of medieval Europe, and a regular coinage system was in existence. Literature was written in Prakrit, a language related to Sanskrit.

The next famous dynasty was the Chalukya (550-750 A.D.), and the most outstanding king of this line was Pulakesin II (608-642). We are again indebted to the Chinese traveler Hiuen Tsang for our knowledge of Pulakesin, who prized equally the arts of war and learning. Hiuen Tsang described Pulakesin's subjects as well behaved and submissive. Before the king sent his soldiers into battle, he would have wine given them so as to make them much braver and their charge more irresistible. Wine was also given to the war elephants for the same purpose. Certainly the armies of Pulakesin II must have been well trained and capable, because, although Harsha was able to defeat his enemies to the east and west, he failed completely to defeat the Chalukya kingdom in the south (see map). The Chalukyas fell about 750, and various other dynasties came to power, only to fall in turn until in 1318 the invading Mohammedans put an end to Hindu rule in the Deccan.

The people in the Deccan never took wholeheartedly to Buddhism, and there is scarcely any mention of it after the twelfth century. Orthodox Hinduism eventually won control of the Deccan prior to the Moslem invasion.

Outstanding artistic achievements of the region were the monasteries hewn out of the rock hillsides. The Kailasa temple, built in the latter half of the eighth century, is completely cut out of solid rock so that it stands free from the hillside.

**Tamil Land.** The Far South, or Tamil Land, was from ancient days divided into vari-

ous Dravidian kingdoms. Little is known of their political history prior to the ninth century, but it is certain that they developed a high state of civilization independently of that of the Indo-Aryans and carried on a rich trade with the Roman empire in the early centuries of the Christian era.

**Tamil trade with the west.** Brisk trade was made possible by the great wealth of southern India. From the soil came spices which were much prized in the western world, from the elephants came valuable ivory, from mines came a profusion of precious stones, while from the seas surrounding Tamil Land divers gathered pearls. The inhabitants were an industrious people, skilled in the manufacture of muslins and silks. They were also capable mariners, who built splendid vessels in which they sailed to Africa and the Near East. Even before the advent of the Roman empire the Tamil kingdoms were engaged in prosperous commercial relations with near and far-off neighbors. From the earliest times they traded with Egypt and Arabia to the west, and the Malay archipelago and China to the east. The widespread nature of their commerce is proved by some interesting examples. The Hebrew word for peacock is a Tamil word, while the Greek words for ginger, cinnamon, and rice come from the same language.

All during the time the Ptolemies held Egypt, the Greeks engaged in profitable trade with southern India, and the Romans developed the commerce still further. When Augustus ascended the throne, the rulers of one Tamil kingdom sent a congratulatory embassy, an honor never before paid any west-

ern prince. We are fortunate in having a vivid account of the embassy. It started from India about 25 B.C. and took about four years en route, many of its members dying of fatigue and privation. The embassy bore unusual presents from the Tamil king, including a partridge as large as an eagle, a gigantic python, immense tortoises, and an armless boy who shot arrows and threw darts with his feet. In later years other embassies made their way back and forth between the Roman empire and the Tamil kingdom.<sup>8</sup>

The increase in commerce that followed the discovery about 45 A.D. of the monsoon winds that blow regularly across the Indian Ocean was very great. Whole colonies of Roman merchants dwelt in Tamil seaports, importing wine, lamps, vases, and gold in return for pepper, pearls, silks, and muslins. Tamil poets have left for us descriptions of Roman ships which were guarded by archers against pirates. In fact, the Tamil kings themselves employed bodyguards of Roman soldiers, and the Indian poets remark about their habit of wearing long coats in a land where comparative nudity is the rule. The earliest copper coins of southern India and Ceylon are copies of Roman coins of the period of Constantine. After realizing the magnitude of the Roman-Tamil trade, we can understand why Ptolemy's knowledge of the geography of southern India is so much more accurate than his acquaintance with the northern regions.

**Chola and Vijayanagar.** In the tenth century the Chola kingdom became the greatest power in the Far South, only to pass in the fourteenth century under the control of what



*A hunting scene of running deer, a charging lion, and frisky horses is represented in this bas relief which decorates the sides of the stairway to an emperor's throne at Hampi in southern India.*

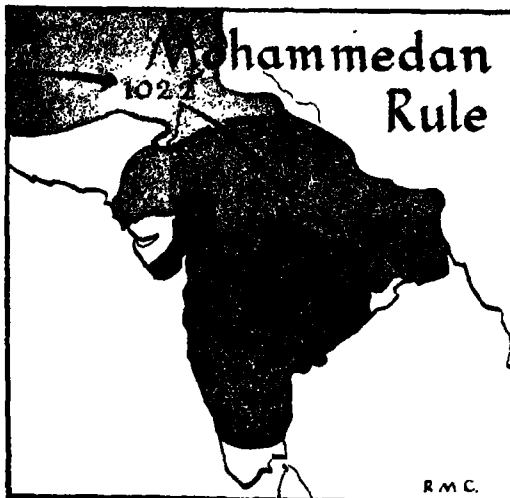
was by that time the greatest of the southern states, Vijayanagar (see map on opposite page). That kingdom (then dominated by a contemporary of Henry VIII of England) possessed a fabulously wealthy capital of over

one hundred thousand houses. Vijayanagar was defeated, pillaged, ravished, and utterly destroyed by the Mohammedans, who spent five months in plundering the capital of the kingdom alone.

### *The Mohammedan Conquest of India (1175-1450)*

**Spread of Islam.** One of the wonders in the history of the spread of culture is the phenomenally wide and rapid expansion of Mohammedan civilization. Within a hundred twenty-five years after the prophet's death in 632, his fanatic followers had carried his message of monotheism, salvation, and simplicity of worship as far as Tours in France (732) and to the Tigris in the east, where they rebuilt Bagdad in 757. We have already seen the cultural heights which Islamic civilization attained in the years which followed. Their civilization stretched from Bagdad to Cordova and produced some of the greatest medieval scientists, doctors, mathematicians, poets, and artists.

The Mohammedans were accustomed to proselytize among conquered peoples, but not usually to exert stronger pressure. When they arrived in India, however, there was considerable persecution of Hinduism, for that faith, with its countless deities, elaborate ritual, powerful priestcraft, and fondness for images, was the exact opposite of everything which the Mohammedan religion held sacred. The gap between the two religions is so tremendous that there has never been a reconciliation.



**Mohammedan invasions.** The Arabs had their first encounter with the Indians in the eighth century when some of their ships were attacked by Indian pirates. In 711 the Mohammedans sent a retaliatory expedition to a seaport on the Indus. In a year or two the southern valley of the Indus became a Mohammedan province. The invaders and the Hindus to the east remained on good terms. In the tenth century, however, more Mohammedan invaders came sweeping through the northwest passes. The newcomers were Turks. They established a principality in the mountains and then proceeded to engage in a completely successful war with the Rajputs of northern India.

Despite destructive forays by various sultans, the Hindu kingdoms of the interior remained independent, and not until the closing years of the twelfth century did the Mohammedans begin to establish a permanent Indian dominion. Mohammed Ghori was the leader of the successful movement against the kingdoms of the interior. He first overran and conquered the lower Indus valley and the Punjab by 1187. Mohammed Ghori then coveted the rich Hindu kingdoms of the interior, but in 1191 the Hindu rajahs combined against the sultan and defeated him. The next year Mohammed returned with another army and routed the Hindu confederacy. In the year 1193 the reduction of Hindustan by the Mohammedans began, for the petty kingdoms fell in quick succession, until finally upper India was completely under Mohammedan control.

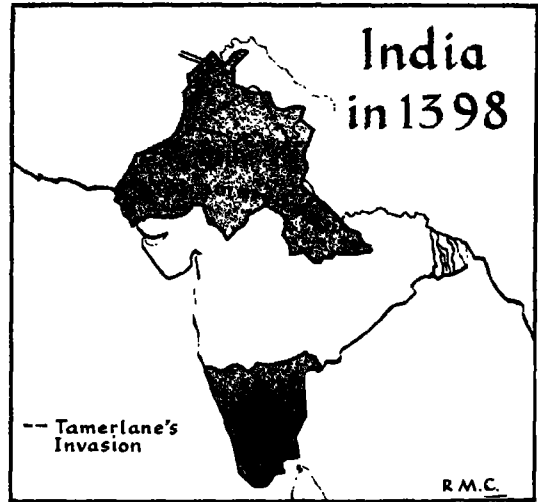
**Mohammedan sultans.** In 1206 Mohammed Ghori was assassinated, to be followed by various rulers whose fortunes are too complicated to be recited here. One ruler led an expedition into the Deccan in 1294, returned with enormous booty, basely murdered his uncle the sultan, and seized the throne in 1296. During the early years of his reign there had been many threats of attack by the Mongols of central Asia. In 1297 the sultan ordered the butchering of thousands of these foreigners, who had settled peacefully in India.

Sultan Mohammed Tughluk (1325-1347) was also eccentric, cruel, and fanatical. He "acquired the throne by murdering his father, became a great scholar and elegant writer, dabbled in mathematics, physics, and Greek philosophy, surpassed his predecessors in bloodshed and brutality, fed the flesh of a rebel nephew to the rebel's wife and children, ruined the country with reckless inflation, and laid it waste with pillage and murder till the inhabitants fled to the jungle."<sup>9</sup> When Delhi was a city rivaling Bagdad and Cairo in size and wealth, the strange sultan suddenly gave an order demanding immediate evacuation of the whole population within three days to a new capital 600 miles distant.

Ferozshah (1351-1388) may well have been the most enlightened Moslem ruler in India to this time. He assisted in irrigation projects, reduced crime and poverty, abolished tortures for crimes, erected some two hundred towns, forty mosques, thirty colleges, fifty dams, one hundred hospitals, and numerous other projects. Ferozshah, however, like all the other sultans, had a profound hatred for Hinduism and acted with the greatest severity and even barbarity in suppressing it wherever possible.

**Effects of Mohammedan rule.** By the time the Mohammedans began to sweep into India, Buddhism had lost its vitality in the land of its birth. It was surviving chiefly in Magadha, whereas Hinduism was winning the rest of northern India. When the Moslem fury struck the land, the decaying faith of Gautama Buddha was almost obliterated, and the monks who managed to escape with their lives fled to inner Asia. Buddhism had almost ceased to exist in northern India by the thirteenth century.

The fate of Hinduism was quite different. It is true that the Mohammedans and the Hindus are poles apart in their faith: The former believe in but one god, the latter in many; the Moslems forbid the existence of any priestcraft, while the Brahmans make up the powerful priestly caste of the Hindus; and the followers of Islam will not permit either



religious images or ritual, whereas the temples of Vishna and Shiva are filled with statues and elaborate ceremony. Yet, despite the antipathy of the two faiths, the Mohammedans were never able to crush the Hindu faith completely, owing to its permanent place in the daily lives of hundreds of millions of devoted Hindus.

**Tamerlane.** The death of Ferozshah threw the country once more into civil war and left it unprotected for a great invasion from the northwest. In 1398, there marched into the Punjab a Barlas Turk who had already conquered central Asia and had now set his heart on acquiring the riches of India—Timur the Lame or, as he is better known to us, Tamerlane. Defeating everything before him, Timur attacked and looted wealthy Delhi, slew perhaps a hundred thousand prisoners in cold blood, and departed for Samarkand, leaving Delhi's few surviving inhabitants to perish of famine or plague. "For two whole months, not a bird moved a wing in the city." After Timur's terrible visitation, the Delhi sultans did not come back to their throne until 1450, to rule and tax their hapless subjects for another century, when a new dynasty, the Mogul, was to arise and briefly gather all India into one fold.

### *Life and Work in Medieval India*

**The medieval Indian.** To this point we have been concerned primarily with the political and intellectual development of medieval India. While such a knowledge is

necessary for an understanding of Indian civilization, our appreciation of it can best be fostered by delving into the everyday life and work of the medieval Indian. How he worked

the land on which he lived, how he fitted into the traditional family and village pattern, and how he dressed, ate, worshiped, married, and died are surely important aspects of Indian culture with which we should familiarize ourselves. We have already witnessed the rise and fall of mighty rulers, the propagation of faiths by religious teachers, and the creation of literatures by great poets. But we will inevitably gain a false perspective of history if we do not always remember that the rulers reigned over great numbers of common people, the religious prophets were speaking to the masses, and the poets simply portrayed the hopes and fears of the same inarticulate millions of everyday men and women who are the bone and sinew of every civilization.

**Indian farming.** India has always been overwhelmingly agricultural. Even in 1921, when industrialism had made gains unknown before, the census revealed that close to seventy-five per cent of the total population had occupations connected with land, while no other single industry could boast of employing as many as three per cent of the inhabitants. The Indian farmer, in medieval and modern times, has devoted himself to the growing of such crops as wheat, barley, cotton, sugar cane, rice, millet, vegetables, and such miscellaneous items as indigo and poppies. Various parts of India specialized in certain crops according to peculiarities of soil and climate; the lower Ganges valley has depended mainly on rice and sugar, the Deccan on cotton, the south on rice and millet, and northern India on cereals and millet.

The peasant in medieval times, like the peasant of today, had few and simple farming implements: plows, hoes, and water-lifts for irrigation purposes. Oxen were used to draw the plows. The following method of irrigation in India has endured for centuries. At the edge of a well a farmer sets up a fork of wood. Between the forks is adjusted a roller over which is thrown a rope tied to a large bucket. The other end of the rope is tied to a bullock, which is driven by one man while his companion empties the bucket as it is drawn to the surface. Artificial canals were an innovation of later times, and the farmer had to depend for his water upon the uncertain rainfall and well-irrigation.

**The village.** Just as India's economic life has always centered around agriculture, so its

social life has always centered around the village. It has been said of India that more than in any other country its people have lived in the village cottage. Today nearly eighty-five per cent of the population live in the country, while in medieval times the percentage was even higher. Furthermore, there has never been much migration of people; even in this day of railroads, statistics show that over ninety per cent of the inhabitants of every district were born in that district and another six per cent were born in districts immediately adjoining.

Let us think, then, of the Indian medieval village as the economic and social center of Indian life, a center made up of various families who had lived there for centuries in the pattern of a self-sufficient economy. Villages were relatively isolated from one another, for there were only meager roads and by-paths, and it was essential that each should produce the food and equipment by which it could maintain itself. Therefore, besides the cultivators of the neighboring fields there lived in the village such artisans as carpenters, potters, weavers, wood carvers, leather workers, and iron workers. The medieval village existed largely on a barter system; the tenant would pay his landlord in grain, and the villagers also paid the artisans in kind. In modern India grain transactions are still the general rule in regions where the influence of the village community is strong despite the ever growing use of money.

**Land tenure and taxation.** The Indian system of land tenure and taxation is an ancient one. According to tradition there have always been two parties to be taken into account in considering the matter, the ruler and the subject. The subject occupied the lands, and he was required to pay a direct share of its gross produce to the ruler in return for the protection which he was entitled to receive. The subject did not own the land, but he had the right to occupy it, provided he performed the duty of cultivation. We have seen previously how rulers would be vanquished by greater conquerors from time to time. Such changes, however, did not affect the position of the subject, for his duty remained the cultivation of the land upon which he toiled, irrespective of political changes. However, these alterations might often affect the share of produce which he would have to pay the state, or they might

bring about new methods in the assessment and collection of such taxes. The revenues were collected from the village community as a whole. Instead of taxing each individual, the state had the aggregate harvest of the village fields placed in a common fund from which the share of the ruler was set aside before the general distribution was made. In theory at least, the system was entirely just, but often the share which the state exacted left a miserable portion for the cultivator and his family.

*The joint-family.* We have seen the importance of the village community in the economic life of India. There is another institution about which we must learn if we are to understand the economic and social life of ancient, medieval, and modern India. This is the joint-family, perhaps the most important of all Hindu social institutions. When the joint-family is analyzed, it will be seen that the social and economic aspects of Indian life are indissolubly merged. The Hindu family is considered to be "joint in food, worship and estate," and consists of the man and woman, their sons, grandsons, great grandsons, and the wives and unmarried daughters of all who are married. It is thus a community whose members are all descended from a common ancestor. The wives and daughters are considered as belonging to the family rather than as actual members of it.

Each Hindu family has a common home, where the worship of the family is conducted and the wants of its various members are provided for. There may be other residences, of course, for individual members and their families, but the spiritual center of the joint-family is the place where the family worship is conducted. All that is earned by individuals in the group goes into a common fund, from which is drawn what is necessary to supply each of the members. The family thus protects, in theory at least, the young child, the pregnant mother, and the decrepit grandparent who can no longer contribute anything to the family fund. It is possible for a man to acquire property for himself which he may use as he pleases, but he must show that he acquired such property without having used the family patrimony.

How is the joint-family governed? First of all, the authority is vested in the father during his lifetime. After the father's death the au-

thority is transferred to the eldest son, provided the family remains undivided. The eldest son is generally the manager and keeps the family accounts, assisted by other members of the family. All males of the group are consulted on serious matters. It is important to keep in mind that property belongs to the family as a whole; the head of the group does not own but simply manages the family estate. If a younger brother is dissatisfied with conditions, he can demand a partition, that is, the right to have management over an equal portion of the ancestral estate. This contingency is provided for in the ancient (and, to the Hindu, sacred) Laws of Manu, where it is expressly stated that "after the death of the father and of the mother, the brothers, being assembled, may divide among themselves in equal shares the paternal estate; for, they have no power (over it) while the parents live."

The joint-family is an extremely ancient institution and has governed the socio-economic life of the large majority of India's people for thousands of years. In modern times the system has been greatly disturbed by such changes as the growth of factories and large cities, which draw men away from their ancestral estates, the prevalence of a money exchange and the appearance of the grasping money lender, and the gradual elimination of the village as a self-sufficient economic unit. But in medieval times the joint-family was an institution full grown. Not only did it exist as a cooperative economic unit in which the individual member labored for, and was helped by, the group; it had definite social effects as well. The joint-family encouraged a strong family life in which the individual was made to feel his subservience to the group. Marriage played a prominent role in the joint-family. It was considered all-important in protecting and perpetuating family ties, and the individual member's pleasure or desires were always treated as being of much less importance than the maintenance of the family estate.

*Life in the village.* What would we see were we to walk down the streets of a typical medieval Indian village? We would find houses crowded together bordering streets which are very narrow and dirty. The entire village is laid out without any plan and is composed largely of cottages built of mud



walls with thatched roofs and dark, windowless rooms. At the door of each house is a ditch into which the refuse from the dwelling as well as manure from the stable is thrown. During the rainy season the ditches become evil-smelling cesspools, which the inhabitants appear not to notice. It is true that the larger towns contain houses which are tiled and not thatched, but even there the streets are narrow and ill-kept. The cleanest and most orderly street in the village is that in which the market is held.

*Pariahs.* As we walk down the twisting thoroughfare we see all types of villagers at work or at leisure. Farmers trudging in from lands adjoining the community, their stolid oxen tugging at the heavy wooden bullock-cart. A man, gaunt and rag-clad, is approaching. No one speaks to him. He is a scavenger who sweeps the streets and removes rubbish. His social status is that of a pariah, or outcaste. This class is treated little better than animals by the more fortunate castes, and it is notorious for its filth and degradation. The pariah's hut is generally vermin-ridden. He is often addicted to drunkenness, a vice which self-respecting Hindus abhor, and he eats meat, a crime that is almost unpardonable to the Brahman. It is the law that when an animal dies in the village its carcass belongs to the scavenger, who then sells the flesh to other pariahs in the neighborhood. Even though the animal died diseased, the pariahs will buy and eat its meat, endangering their own health.

*Village artisans.* But not all whom we see on the street are pariahs. The majority are Sudras, that is, of the lowest caste. Many of them engage in occupations which are necessary for the existence of the village. The barber is one of this class. His job is the trimming of the beard, the shaving of the head, the paring of the nails on both the hands and feet, and the cleaning of the villagers' ears. Like the barbers of medieval Europe, the Hindu haircutters are also the village surgeons. With their razors they perform amputations, while the stiletto-like instrument with which they pare nails is likewise used for opening abscesses. We can easily understand why plagues and skin disorders are common.

We pass by a Sudra washerman, whose business is much the same as that of any other washerman, but the nature of his task is so unclean that he is held in little esteem by the

other villagers. Both the barber and the washerman are paid in grain by their employers at harvest time. A Sudra workman much more highly respected by his fellowmen is the potter. Although he is poorly paid and generally quite uneducated, the potter performs a valuable service in providing the villagers with their water jars, pitchers, cooking pots, cups, frying pans, and household dishes. We may also pass the carpenter, whose role in the village economy is too important for him to be snubbed socially. He makes the plow, the woodwork for the village houses, and such miscellaneous articles as bedsteads, lamp stands, chests, and boxes. Many a carpenter is also a skilled woodcarver, employed to decorate the dwellings of the well-to-do.

Another important village artisan is the blacksmith, for he makes the iron tip of the plow and the tools of the carpenter, the barber, and the tailor. Other workers in metal include the makers of brass bangles which the poor wear and the gold and silver workers, whose clientele consists of the richer classes. One group of Sudra artisans who are shunned even by their own caste are the tanners. That state of affairs comes from the nature of the materials with which the tanner and shoemaker work. To a Hindu the touching of the hide of dead animals is something utterly repulsive, and the leather worker is forced to keep his quarters on the outskirts of the village.

*Entertainers.* As we come into the village market we jostle individuals who, like ourselves, are not permanent residents of the community. They are a vagabond group who travel from place to place, entertaining the populace as jugglers, conjurers, rope dancers, and acrobats. Among the wandering band can be seen charlatans who sell quack medicines which are supposed to cure all sickness. On a makeshift stage built of boards and trestles actors are performing sacred plays at one time, while at another they delight the crowd with obscene or slapstick farces. Another form of entertainment which always fascinates the onlooker is the ritual of the snake charmers. Seated cross-legged on the ground, these men play on their flutes, coaxing the deadly cobra into rhythmic motions from the jar before them. While watching such entertainment we may be molested by religious beggars, who incessantly ask for alms from the villagers by striking bronze gongs or blowing conch shells.

**Manners and customs.** It is interesting to watch the manner in which people pass and greet one another on the street. The Brahman looks upon the outcaste as unclean and takes care that he will not pass even through the shadow of such a person, for it would defile him. Hindus who are not Brahmans will greet Brahmans by joining both hands, touching the forehead, and then putting them above the head. The Brahman extends his right hand and gravely replies, "Asirvadam," which is much the same as our "God bless you." Women bow respectfully to the men but say nothing, while no man could kiss his wife or sister publicly without incurring social censure. We in the west who are used to greeting one another with remarks of how well the other appears, would be both surprised and amused to hear Hindu friends salute each other with such consoling remarks as, "How thin and worn you look! I fear you must be very ill!" We shall offend a Hindu if we tell him how well he looks, because it will be interpreted as jealousy and envy at his possessing such splendid health.

If we are invited by Hindu friends to partake of food with them, we must expect no meat of any kind. Their philosophy always stresses the unity of life and therefore to them it is a heinous crime to kill any animal for the purpose of nourishment. Even to ask the ordinary Hindu if he eats meat is an unpardonable insult, although we have already noticed that the outcastes often do so, which is one of the reasons why they are considered unclean by the members of the four main castes. The Hindu also abstains from alcoholic beverages. High-caste Hindus rarely use plates or dishes but take their food off leaves. Nor do they use spoons or forks but eat everything with their fingers. In fact, the Hindu considers it basely unclean to put forks or spoons a second time in one's mouth, because they are still defiled (even though washed) with saliva. It is one custom which the Indian cannot understand about the westerner, just as he thinks it utterly dirty to wear the same suit of clothes from one day to the next without having constantly re-cleaned it.

We may be somewhat distressed upon having finished our meal to find our companions making a loud display of belching, but it is considered a subtle compliment to the host and a sign of good digestion. If we should sneeze, our friends will automatically exclaim,



*Carelessly against the nose of a sacred stone bull of Shiva rests the hoop of this Indian boy. The bull is especially venerated by the Shiva sect, although it is sacred to all Hinduism. The boy's caste is indicated by the painted marks on his forehead.*

"Ramal" for sneezing has always been considered some sort of mystery. The Romans were accustomed to say "*Salve*," the Germans, "*Gesundheit*," and many of us call out, "God bless you!"

**Costume.** As we pursue our way along the village streets, we cannot fail to notice the unusual items about the people's dress. The clothing is generally of the simplest description. Men wear two pieces of cotton cloth, each over ten feet long and three feet wide. With the first cloth they cover their shoulders; with the second they clothe their loins. These pieces are arranged to give the appearance of careless and natural grace and are sometimes ornamented with borders of colored silk. The Hindu also wears a large sheet wrapped about him when a cold morning or evening demands extra warmth. We shall be struck by the extreme cleanliness of the dress of the caste members, for they are constantly changing and washing their costume.

To offset their simplicity of dress, the Hindus indulge in ornamentation. All people wear earrings, some of which are quite enormous, fashioned of gold or a less valuable metal, according to the wealth of the owner. Gold chains, strings of pearls, and expensive rings are to be found on rich Hindus, while girdles of gold and silver thread are often to be seen around their waists. We cannot help noticing the presence of various colored caste marks on the foreheads of the passersby. The most common mark is called the *pottu*, and consists of a circular mark about an inch in diameter placed in the center of the forehead.



*The figure of Shiva in his "Dance of Destruction" is almost womanly in this fourteenth-century bronze.*

It is often yellow in color, although it may also be black or red. Sects such as those which pay special attention to Vishnu and Shiva have their own particular marks by which the wearer may be easily identified.

The dress of the women consists of a single piece of cloth sometimes thirty to forty feet long and about four feet wide. This cloth is wound several times around the body in such a manner as to give a graceful appearance. The Hindu women, unlike those of some other Asiatic countries, do not wear any veil or covering over their faces. But, like their sex in many another civilization, the Hindu women are fond of cosmetics. They paint the face, neck, arms, and all other visible parts of the body with a deep yellow cosmetic of saffron, and they think that their beauty is thereby enhanced, although we may find it difficult to adjust ourselves to their appearance. They oil the hair to make it more glossy, part it in the middle, and fasten it behind the left ear with an ornament. The custom of wearing a flower in the hair creates a colorful touch. The women are fond of loading down their wrists and ankles with expensive bracelets, while it is common to notice women

wearing gold ornaments in their right nostrils. The young Hindu girl often has her arms tattooed with indelible designs of figures or flowers, and sometimes a spot or two is put on her chin or cheeks, giving an effect much like the patches with which European ladies will later try to enhance their beauty.

**Hindu women.** The medieval Hindu woman is far from emancipated. She looks after her household duties but is quite lacking in formal education. In fact, a respectable woman would probably be ashamed to admit being able to read, for the only members of her sex who can do so are temple dancers and courtesans. Man is supreme in Indian society. The wife addresses her husband with the greatest respect, even calling him "My master, my lord," while he often treats her with the minimum of courtesy. But though the woman is considered definitely inferior to the man in Indian society, she is given the utmost respect when she walks in public.

**Marriage.** The most important event in the Hindu woman's life is marriage, naturally enough, for Indian social and economic life revolves around the joint-family. The Hindu practices monogamy, for the Hindu gods themselves possess only one wife each. It is customary for both sexes to marry young, and girls are often betrothed when they are but five to nine years old. The parents decide about the suitability of the couple, more or less disregarding the personal inclinations of the ones concerned. Particular attention is paid to the caste of the prospective bride, while the advantages accruing from an alliance of the families must not be overlooked. After the parents of the couple are satisfied with the prospect of a union, and the financial preliminaries such as the payment of a dowry and the problem of wedding expenses have been worked out, the parents of the groom present themselves at the home of the girl and the main members of the families discuss details. The actual marriage ceremony takes five days and is extremely complicated and expensive; and when it is all over, the couple look upon their union as permanently binding.

The sanctity of marriage has given rise to another unique Hindu institution—*suttee*. The custom, which obligates widows to sacrifice themselves voluntarily on the funeral pyres of their husbands, awakens in us a feeling of repugnance. It has been considered particu-

larly honorable for a woman so to sacrifice herself as proof of her wifely love, and there are innumerable cases where widows have fanatically thrown themselves on the funeral fire. However, it is not binding upon Hindu women to act in such a fashion, although they are forbidden ever to remarry.

**Temples and religious customs.** We cannot pass through the village without coming across at least one temple, for religious edifices dot the entire Indian landscape. It is considered a worthy and charitable act to give money for the construction of a temple, and they are to be found even in isolated spots along the highways and in the forests. Some temples are old and dilapidated, while others are magnificently furnished and maintained.

We pass through an entrance tower and enter various courtyards before coming to the shrine of the deity to whom the temple is dedicated. The sanctuary is usually dimly lit and filled with flowers, incense, and offerings of fruit. The statue of the god is generally placed in a niche and is adorned with rich garments and, on festival days, with valuable jewels. We find the physiognomies of the deities scarcely heart-warming, for their sculptors have endowed them with strange and even terrifying features. The priests of the temple are drawn from the Brahman caste, and they perform rituals twice daily. Connected with the temple is a group of dancing girls who execute ceremonial movements in connection with the service, while the temple musicians play and sing in honor of the god. The Hindus are exceedingly fond of music, but the notes seem discordant to us because we are not accustomed to their harmonies.

Every important temple has at least one or two processions every year. On a huge car supported on massive wheels the statue of the deity, clothed in rich vestments and jewels and protected by a costly canopy, is placed. Ropes are attached to the car, and hundreds of persons gladly pull the vehicle through the streets amid the cries of the multitude and the din of trumpets, drums, and musical instruments.



*Vishnu the Preserver, in contrast to the dancing Shiva, is all calmness and veneration.*

Some of the temple dancers are seated on the car, fanning the statue with peacock feathers, while great crowds of enthusiastic votaries bring up the rear. The Brahman priests are richly appareled at such times, and they are greeted by the people with obvious signs of respect.

We leave the village realizing that much which we have seen is bizarre and strange to our western eyes and ears, but conscious of the extraordinary color and vitality that permeate medieval Indian life. The institutions which we have discovered have already endured for centuries and will continue to live on into what the west calls modern times.

### *Summary*

We have now studied briefly the history of classical and medieval India. We have witnessed the passage of fifteen centuries from the age of Buddha to the triumph of the Mohammedan invaders. When we link this long stretch of history to those still earlier

periods of Indian civilization which fade back another three thousand years to the ancient cities of Mohenjo-Daro and Harappa in the Indus valley, we begin to catch a glimpse of the enduring qualities of Indian culture. True enough, India has never permanently enjoyed peace, unity, or freedom. She has been overrun by Indo-Aryans, Mongols, Turks, Persians, Greeks, Mohammedans, Portuguese, Dutch, French, and British. She has been the cockpit of endless racial, religious, social, and political wars. She has never possessed a common religion, language, or sense of patriotism. She has never been a national state. She has never known anything except a seething, frustrated, and blindly groping desire to be free—free from the foreign exploitation and domestic unrest with which her people have grappled for centuries.

Yet, despite the anarchy which has gripped India from primitive to modern times, she is singularly unified and enduring. The great majority of Indians are Hindus in their faith, and Hinduism still teaches the ancient doctrines of the *Upanishads*, the unity of life, *maya*, *moksha*, *karma*, and reincarnation. It is thus natural for the Hindu to regard our physical world and its pains and limitations as evils from which to escape. The unhappy history of political and economic India certainly strengthens his desire for escape. Again, because the Hindus believe in the social and religious necessity of a caste system, their unique theory of society, bound as it is with numberless complex restrictions and observances, has endured for three thousand years and has kept Indian social life fixed. So strong have been India's religious and social beliefs that they proved the downfall of rulers who tried to change them. They would long ago have destroyed the British had Great Britain tried to modify them seriously.

The Indian temperament is fundamentally different from our own. Our standards of evaluation are not theirs. We consider progress largely a matter of science, inventions, and material wealth. They consider progress to be genuine and permanent only when spiritual values are involved. We point with pride to our present-day inventions, but they reply that these inventions are being used not to unfold man's spiritual destiny but to destroy him. Are we in the west any happier, they ask, for all the gadgets we possess? If we are, why, then, are we plagued with our catastrophic wars which threaten to destroy all civilization; why have we so much unemployment, so much maladjustment, suicide, divorce, crime, so much restless seeking after goals which seem to them ephemeral and lifeless?

Let us keep in mind the magnificence of India's past civilization. She has had splendid rulers and able administrators; the gentle Asoka takes his place among the greatest rulers in history. The cultural achievements of the Gupta empire are fully equal to those of western Europe during the same period. The literary and artistic merits of Indian genius are likewise of a high caliber. The sculpture in Asoka's age, used mainly as architectural decoration, was of a high order, while in architecture, religion provided the inspiration for the impressive rock-cut temples and the unique *stupas* with their elaborately carved gateways. The golden age of the Guptas produced exquisite frescoes and sculpture characterized by dignity and restraint. The *Vedas* and the *Mahabharata* are epics which rival the *Iliad*. The Gupta poet Kalidasa wrote dramas

which have been compared with those of Shakespeare, and the art and poetry of the Deccan and Tamil Land prove how richly endowed with artistic genius was non-Aryan-speaking India.

In science, too, India has made her contributions; Hindu astronomy and mathematics were the most advanced of those of any ancient people, and we are indebted to India for the so-called "Arabic" numerals, the decimal system, and many of the basic elements of algebra. The Hindus of the Gupta age also made valuable discoveries in the fields of industrial chemistry and medicine.

Finally, Indian religious thought has been unique. The teachings of the *Upanishads* are quite distinct from western philosophy and have deeply influenced such thinkers as Schopenhauer, Emerson, and Bergson. Through Indian religious thought we obtain our truest insight into Indian behavior. And India has borne her quota of saints and philosophers. Mahatma Gandhi is but the latest in a long line of teachers which stretches back into the mists of ancient Indian history. The greatest of them all was Gautama Buddha.

# MEDIEVAL CHINA AND JAPAN: 600 B.C.—1600 A.D.

## MEDIEVAL CHINA

<b>221-206 B.C.</b>	<b>Ch'in Dynasty</b>	
221-211	Shih Huang Ti's rule Unification of China Great Wall of China extended	Ancient literature destroyed
<b>206 B.C.-220 A.D.</b>	<b>Han Dynasty</b>	
140-87	Wu Ti's rule Extension of China	
c. 100		Ssu-ma Ch'ien, "Father of History" writes <i>Historical Record</i> Literature and the arts flourish Coming of Buddhism Invention of paper <i>Shuo Wen</i> , oldest dictionary, published
c. 67		
100		
<b>220-618 A.D.</b>	<b>Age of Chaos</b>	Poetry by the Seven Sages of the Bamboo Grove
<b>618-906</b>	<b>Golden Age of the T'angs</b>	
627-650	T'ai Tsung's rule	Religious tolerance Coming of Mohammedanism
654-705	Rule of the "Warrior Empress"	
8th and 9th centuries	Foreign commerce developed	
713-756	Age of "Brilliant Emperor" Hsuan Tsung	T'ang poetry; Li Po (705-762), Tu Fu (712-770) T'ang painting and sculpture Wu Tao-tzu, father of Chinese painting <i>Diamond Sutra</i> , first printed book
868		
	<b>Chaos and Anarchy</b>	
906-960	Five Little Ages	
<b>960-1279</b>	<b>Sung Dynasty</b>	Sung art, "culmination of Chinese art" Wang An-shih's philosophy
1162-1227	Mongol invasions under Genghis Khan	
<b>1279-1368</b>	<b>Mongol Dynasty</b>	
	Brilliant Age of Kublai Khan Marco Polo	Drama and the novel developed
<b>1368-1644</b>	<b>Ming Dynasty</b>	

## MEDIEVAL JAPAN

	<b>The Evolution of Japan</b>	
660 B.C.	Jimmu Tenno becomes emperor	
552 A.D.		Coming of Buddhism
621	End of Prince Shotoku Taishi's rule	
645	Great Reform set forth	
710-794	Nara period	
794-1156	Heian period	Development of literature and art <i>Pillow Book</i> , by Sei Shonagon
1146-1198	Yoritomo establishes military dictatorship	Advance in literature, art, and social customs
13th century	Hojo period	<i>Bushido</i> , the unwritten code of chivalry and honor, recognized
<b>1281</b>	"Great Wind"—Chinese invasion fails	

## CHAPTER 11

### *The Men of T'ang*



WE saw in our previous chapters on India and China that in both civilizations the bases of philosophy, art, literature, and many of the social institutions had been laid by the time of Buddha and Confucius in the sixth century B.C. We have also just witnessed the flowering of Indian culture during the centuries between the death of Buddha and the Mohammedan triumph in the seventh century A.D. We are now about to mark the development of Chinese culture from the end of the Chou dynasty in the third century B.C. to the dawn of modern times in the fourteenth.

Even more than in India, we shall notice the striking continuity of cultural forces all through the long stretch of time, for whereas the culture of India was successively modified by periodic invasions from the outside, creating great changes in customs, government, art, and religious beliefs, the culture of China is more indigenous because its history was relatively more stable. This does not mean that China was not attacked from the outside, for she was, frequently. But her basic culture was never violently modified to the same extent as Hindu society was by the Mohammedan conquerors. We can perhaps show the difference by stating that, where Indian civilization is the synthesis of opposing cultures, Chinese civilization is the product of a basic native culture which has always been able to assimilate foreign modifying elements. The civilization thus nurtured for over two thousand years is truly rich and polished in a multitude of ways. Undoubtedly China gained many new, valuable ideas when the occident brought her its science and efficiency. But she would be infinitely the poorer were she to throw overboard those intellectual and artistic treasures which are uniquely hers.

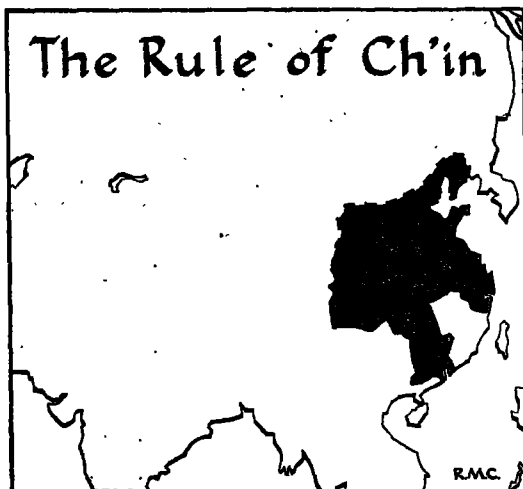


We shall see how Japan derived her culture mainly from migrating Chinese who, in the days of the Chou dynasty, brought to Nippon the use of metals, sericulture, and the Chinese language. The Japanese early established and still maintain a "behind-scenes" military control over their ruling dynasty, the oldest in the world.

### *From Empire to Empire (256 B.C.-618 A.D.)*

**Ch'in rule (221-206 B.C.).** Confucius lived during the turbulent years of the long declining Chou dynasty, a period which was marked politically by the division of China into innumerable petty states. In fact, the years 841-221 B.C. have been aptly described as the feudal age of China, so utterly was the country divided and the monarchy decentralized. The last monarch of the Chou dynasty died in 256 B.C., and the principal states of China spent the next thirty-five years in struggling for supreme power. One of them was the state of Ch'in, a large area to the northwest, which was composed of a mixture of Chinese and non-Chinese peoples and was looked down upon by the older states as quite barbarian. But the kings of Ch'in triumphed over their rivals, annexing one state after another, so that by 221 B.C. the Middle Flowery Kingdom was once more ruled by a single monarch.

**Shih Huang Ti.** The king of Ch'in took the august title Shih Huang Ti, which literally means First Universal Ruler. His successor was to be called the Second Autocratic Divinity, and so on *ad aeternum*. What is important to remember here is the use of the term *Huang Ti* to mean Emperor for all succeeding rulers of China.



Shih Huang Ti was one of the most extraordinary figures in all Chinese history. He destroyed the conflicting law systems of the feudal states and substituted the code of Ch'in and its standards of weights and measures throughout the country. He also standardized the written language so that one intelligible script could be recognized the length and breadth of the land. He collected and destroyed the people's weapons to lessen the danger of revolt at home, and extended and strengthened the Great Wall from the north-west frontier of Ch'in eastward to the sea (see map), a distance of 1400 miles. Portions of the Great Wall had been built as far back as the fourth century B.C. by the rulers of various northern states in order to keep back from their northern frontiers bands of mounted marauders from the depths of central and north-eastern Asia. The huge fortification, built partly of stone and partly of brick and earth, about twenty-five feet high and fifteen feet thick, was erected through forced labor. Because thousands of the emperor's enemies were forced to toil at the huge undertaking and, as it is said, "every stone cost a human life," Shih Huang Ti has been cursed to the present day. He also forced other thousands to build roads from his capital to the farthest outposts of the empire in order to link together his people.

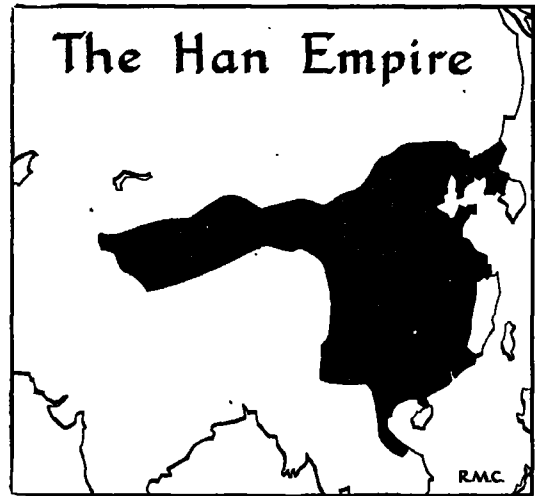
**Destruction of ancient literature.** Unfortunately, Shih Huang Ti came into conflict with the Confucian scholars. His aim was to destroy the old feudal system, whereas the teachings of Confucius lauded the early feudal age as an era of virtue and justice. The scholars not only condemned the Ch'in emperor's innovations by comparing them unfavorably with ancient traditions but pointed out that the old books had described the state of Ch'in as semibarbarous. The emperor perceived the danger of allowing hostile scholars to spread reactionary doctrines; so he determined to stamp out all memory of the past. This he did by ordering that all copies of the *Shu King*, or *Canon of History*, and the *Shih*

*King, or Book of Poetry* (except those held by certain court officials) must be burned. All who were found guilty of discussing the teachings of the forbidden writings were to die. Four hundred sixty scholars are said to have been put to death for violating the harsh decrees, while the effect upon tradition was catastrophic. The ancient institutions were either obliterated or forgotten in a short time, and feudalism lost forever its claim upon the popular mind. Although the outlawed literature was mostly pieced together during the Han period (206 B.C.- 220 A.D.), many gaps were left in the literature and philosophy of ancient China.

**Shih Huang Ti's achievements.** Naturally, Chinese scholars were long harsh in their estimate of Shih Huang Ti. It is hard to evaluate the emperor fairly. He was oftentimes cruel and short-sighted; on the other hand, he possessed an ideal of a unified China which his scholarly enemies could not grasp. Mustapha Kemal Ataturk, the recent dictator of Turkey, was in some respects analogous to China's ancient "strong man." Both men rescued their countries from internal disintegration and external attack. Both encouraged drastic changes in the written language of their countries, both instituted important domestic reforms, and both broke old political and religious traditions despite savage resistance.

**Fall of the Ch'ins.** But Shih Huang Ti's reforms were so drastic that they excited the hatred of nearly everyone, so that when he died in 211 B.C. his dynasty was destroyed utterly in five short years. In 206 B.C. a general, victorious over his rivals, assumed the yellow robe of sovereignty and established his new capital in the city of Sianfu. The new emperor had once been stationed for four years at the Han River, a tributary of the Yangtze. The dynasty was henceforth called the Han, and even today a favorite name for the Chinese people is "The Sons of Han," after the revered dynasty established by this general.

**The Han dynasty.** The Han dynasty endured from 206 B.C. to 220 A.D. and was a decidedly progressive era for China. Some important events in the reign of the dynasty deserve notice. In 195 B.C. the emperor paid a visit to the tomb of Confucius and there offered a sacrifice to the sage's spirit. From that time on, an ever-increasing reverence began to be paid the philosopher, until the time came when the worship of Confucius was

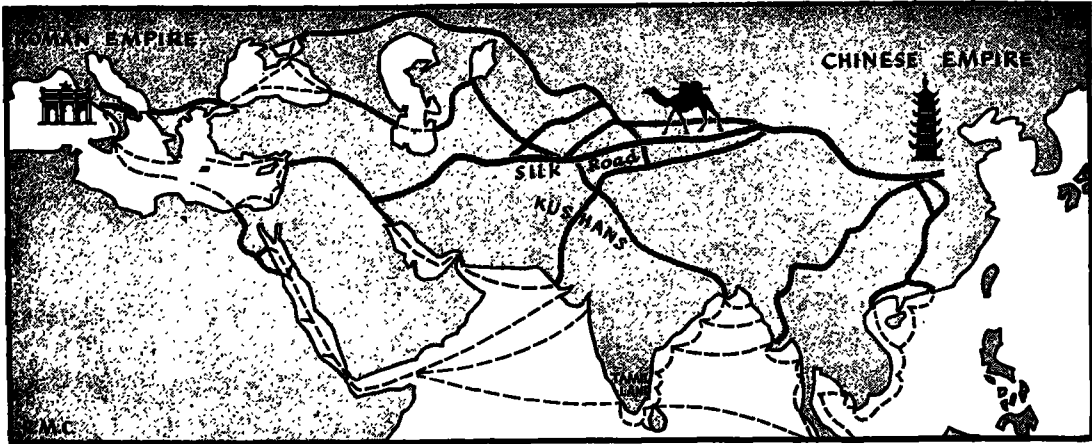


established as a great national cult which later dynasties were to glorify to dizzy heights. However, as one scholar points out, the first mention of such a cult is in 59 A.D., when the emperor decreed that sacrifices should be paid the scholar in the government schools.<sup>1</sup>

**Wu Ti.** The greatest Han ruler was the sixth of the line, Wu Ti (140-87 B.C.), better known as the Martial Emperor. Under him the invading Huns were repulsed and with the help of his able generals the territory of China was extended westward to a remarkable degree. China's frontiers were safeguarded by his vigilant rule and the Great Wall (see map above), a combination which was instrumental in deflecting the impact of the barbarian Huns so that they pressed westward instead of wreak havoc on the Roman empire.

The expansion of Chinese rule proved valuable for world civilization, for now trade sprang up with the west, as proved by the references in Horace, Virgil, Pliny the Elder, and other Roman writers to various Chinese products. Trade routes led across Turkestan to the Tigris and thence to Rome and Alexandria, or through mountain passes to the Indus River and by sea to Europe (see map, page 282).

However, the later Han emperors were largely weaklings and unable to cope with renewed attacks by the barbarians who swept through the Great Wall and conquered large tracts in the north. A four-hundred-year period of chaos and governmental decentralization lay between the Han and T'ang dynasties (about 220-618).



*As long ago as the days of the Roman empire, the Han dynasty, and the rule of Kanishka, caravans traveled the silk route of inner Asia and traders went from India to China along the ancestor of the modern Burma road.*

**The coming of Buddhism.** During the Han dynasty Buddhism was spread in China. The faith probably came by way of trade routes from India. We know that the Chinese had heard of Buddhism by 2 B.C., and it may have filtered in from Turkestan as early as the third century B.C. About 67 A.D. a special royal mission returned from India, introducing Buddhist doctrine into China. Ming Ti (58-76 A.D.) gave Buddhism official recognition, and so it began to spread through China. At first its progress was hindered by the suspicion on the part of the Chinese that Buddhist monasticism (similar to Christian monasticism) did not fit into the country's family tradition. But much of its mysticism was like that of Taoism and this slowly became adaptable to the Chinese mind. Again, the Buddhism which made so many converts in China was quite unlike the faith taught by Buddha in India. The Chinese version was Mahayana Buddhism, with its acceptance of Bodhisattvas, Buddhas, and even local Chinese gods. Today there are about ten separate Buddhist sects in China, and scarcely any is similar in its teachings to the doctrines taught by the Buddha.

Yet the influence of Buddhism on China has been extensive and enduring. Not only did Buddhism bring to the Chinese a new spiritual horizon in which salvation was held out to all classes, rich or poor, in contrast to the more aristocratic Confucianism and the much more abstruse Taoism, but it had a tremendous effect on the intellectual and artistic life of the people. Its philosophy was

sufficiently complex and far-reaching to engage the mind of the cleverest philosopher, while the cloisters of the Buddhist monastery provided a safe haven for those gentle or weary souls who wished to escape the chaos of the outer world and seek a life of contemplation.

**Buddhist influence in art and literature.** In the realm of art fresh ideas were created by the presence of Buddhism. In northwest India, although Buddha had forbidden it, the first statues of him were made. Here the Greek artistic influence had left its mark, with the result that sculpture became Greco-Indian in technique. The style found its way to China, where statues have been found which show apparent Greek influence in their faces and draping.

The pagoda came with Buddhism—undoubtedly inspired, in part at least, by the Indian *stupa*. Made of wood, brick, or stone, the pagodas vary greatly in shape, being round, square, or polygonal. As time went on, the pagoda lost its connection with Buddhism and was considered a means of bringing good luck to the city in which it was built.

In spite of the prohibitions against idolatry, Buddhism stimulated sculpture in stone, bronze, and clay. Painting, too, was presumably influenced by the new subject matter. The only surviving examples of Han painting are a few bricks with painted figures, but the excellence of later painting shows that highly developed art must have preceded it. Literature was advanced by Buddhist authors of Indian and Chinese and, later, Korean and Japanese, origin. They translated foreign literary pieces

into Chinese and wrote a great quantity of philosophical treatises. Some of the most outstanding Chinese poets have been Buddhists.

**Han literature and scholarship.** The Han dynasty brought peace to China for long enough to encourage literature and the arts. The invention of paper in the first century A.D. proved of tremendous aid to literature, its superiority to pottery, bones, and bamboo slips being obvious. The Hans were responsible for recovering a great portion of the Confucian literature which Shih Huang Ti had ordered destroyed. The recovery of some of the ancient classics from an old wall near the home of Confucius led to a revival of classical studies. Many original works of genuine literary value were also created at this time.

A contemporary of Wu Ti was the Chinese Herodotus, or "Father of History," Ssu-ma Ch'ien. His father had started to write a history of China but had died leaving the work unfinished. Ssu-ma Ch'ien completed the epochal study, publishing it as the *Shih Chi*, or *Historical Record*. The history runs from the beginnings of Chinese life to the historian's own age (about 100 B.C.). E. T. Williams praises the scholar highly for his freedom from superstition, his careful weighing of evidence, and his special chapters on "religion, music, astronomical occurrences and other natural phenomena, as well as changes in legislation and modifications of the calendar."<sup>2</sup>

The Han dynasty performed a valuable service for later scholars when the *Shuo Wen*, a study of the meanings of some ten thousand Chinese characters, was compiled. The book, published in the year 100, is probably the oldest dictionary in the world.

Many brilliant poets flourished under the Han dynasty. There is a saying that "the *Shih Ching* represents the roots of the Chinese poetical tree, the Han poetry its bursting into leaf, and the T'ang poets its full fruition."<sup>3</sup>

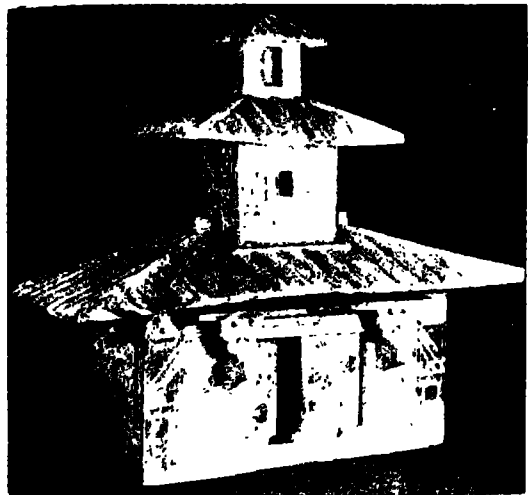
Definite proof of the advances in learning can be found in the *Annals of the Han Dynasty*, where we read that the Imperial Library contained 3123 volumes of the classics, 2705 philosophical books, 1318 of poetry, 2528 on mathematics, 868 on medicine, and 790 on warfare.

**An age of change.** After such a great era of political consolidation, social change, and intellectual stimulation as we have witnessed during the centuries of the Han dynasty,

China from 220 to 618 A.D. underwent a period of grave disorder. Like all preceding dynasties, the Han had gradually deteriorated from its primary strength to utter incompetence, until it finally disappeared altogether. The centuries that followed were filled with civil wars, divisions of China into numerous kingdoms which rose only to perish in short order, and external wars between the Chinese and such invaders as the Tatars and Turks. China became a melting-pot of races, customs, creeds, and tongues, but what appeared on the surface to be a civilization in collapse was in reality a civilization in transition and assimilation.

Furthermore, some very real contributions to the enrichment of Chinese culture were made during the transitional period. Buddhism stimulated intercourse with India. Pilgrims brought back devotional books and objects of art, ships traded along the coasts of India and Ceylon. Among the rulers of the many dynasties which rose and fell during this chaotic period was one in the seventh century who is said to have employed two million men in his vast public-works schemes. Although he drove his laborers until they died by thousands, this emperor rebuilt cities and began construction of the Grand Canal.

**Poetry of the period.** Literature likewise received attention. The poetry of the period portrays the tribulations of a people torn by civil war and their desire to escape its hardships. In the third century there arose a



The Buddhist-inspired pagoda is seen in square form on this decorated pottery model of a Han-dynasty building. Notice the cleverly-built sliding doors.

group of poets called The Seven Sages of the Bamboo Grove, one of whom "desired always to be followed by two servants, one with a bottle of wine, the other with a spade to bury him when he fell."<sup>4</sup> T'ao Ch'ien (365-427) is noted for his allegory *The Peach Blossom Fountain*, indirectly condemning the misgovernment of his age. This bard, who went in search of "length of years and depth of wine," thus describes the poet of his time:

A scholar lives on yonder hill,  
His clothes are rarely whole to view,  
Nine times a month he eats his fill,  
Once in ten years his hat is new;  
A wretched lot! and yet the while  
He ever wears a sunny smile.<sup>5</sup>

### *The Golden Age of the T'angs (618-906)*

**T'ang rulers.** In our discussion of medieval India we saw how in the era of the Guptas, Indian culture attained a zenith hitherto unmatched. As the Gupta was the golden age of Hindu culture, so the T'ang was the golden age of medieval China. So vividly has the period been impressed upon the Chinese that today many call themselves not only "The Sons of Han" but also "The Men of T'ang." The new dynasty was founded by a general, a duke of T'ang, who succeeded in overthrowing the existing weak dynasty. After nine years of rule the usurper abdicated in favor of his second son, who was in reality the founder of the dynasty, since he had forced his timid father to rebel against the ruling house. This second

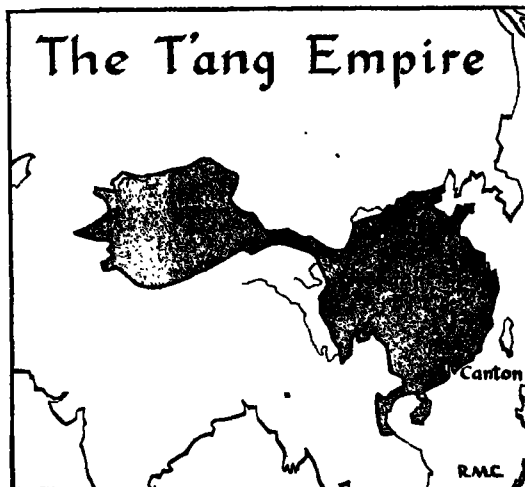
A deeper note is sounded by T'ao Ch'ien in this description of his home. A Taoist poet, he therefore stressed the value of absorbing the silence and strength of nature:

I have built me a house in a populous quarter.  
Yet I hear no noises of horses and carts.  
Ask you me, how that can be?  
Where the mind is abstracted, locality seems  
to fade away.  
I pick chrysanthemums under the eastern  
hedge,  
And gaze afar at the hill in the south.  
Fair is the prospect at the close of day,  
When birds are flying home in pairs . . .  
In all this there lies a hidden meaning,  
But words fail me when I try to express it.<sup>6</sup>

son became emperor under the name T'ai Tsung, "Great Ancestor of the T'ang."

**T'ai Tsung (627-650).** T'ai Tsung is one of the greatest emperors in China's long history. Starting out as a warrior who repelled Turkish invaders in the west and reconquered those areas which had assumed an independent status after the fall of the Han dynasty, T'ai Tsung soon turned his attention to the problems of peace. To further knowledge, he ordered published an elaborate edition of the *Thirteen Classics* of Confucius and stressed the value of historical writings when he said, "By using a mirror of brass you may see to adjust your cap; by using antiquity as a mirror, you may learn to foresee the rise and fall of empires."<sup>7</sup> He made advances in the study of penology when he sent 290 prisoners condemned to death into the harvest fields on condition they return after working. When all did so, he set them free and ruled that an emperor should never ratify a death sentence until he had fasted three days, so that no subject might become the victim of anger.

T'ai Tsung remained true to Confucianism, but he showed his tolerance of other religions by inviting the missionaries of other faiths to come in and teach their views. Christian missionaries of the Nestorian sect came about 634 or 635, while Mohammedans a few years later made many converts. We do not know the exact year when Mohammedanism made its entry into China. It is possible that the faith came to China by way of sea routes in the



early seventh century, because at that time (when the T'ang era was just beginning) the Arabs controlled most of the ocean commerce of the Chinese. In fact, the Arabs constituted the largest group of foreigners in Canton and other ports, and we find even an embassy arriving at the Chinese capital from Arabia in 651. Today there are about fifteen mosques in Peking (Peiping). Scholars remark upon the religious enlightenment of T'ai Tsung, who encouraged tolerance in an age when Europe was still poverty-ridden, ignorant, and intolerant.

**Government under the T'angs.** T'ai Tsung strengthened the administrative system of the country. Those areas inhabited by non-Chinese people were allowed to keep their own princes, who were given Chinese names. Over the rest of the empire, which was Chinese in population, he governed by means of a bureaucracy recruited through a civil-service program, the roots of which, as earlier indicated, went back to the Han period. However, if the emperor found a man who had distinct ability but no literary degree, he had no hesitation in appointing him to an appropriate post.

T'ai Tsung redivided the empire into ten *tao*, or provinces, and these in turn into *chou*, or prefectures. Officials supervised the divisions, while from the emperor direct went imperial commissioners to handle such particular problems as droughts or floods.

The prefectures were divided into sub-prefectures, so that the central government had a very accurate knowledge of every locality in the empire. Such a government was highly centralized and required a great number of civil servants. These officials were recruited from scholars trained at the Imperial College located in the capital city, Changan, on the Wei River. The bureaucracy could not have functioned had it not been for the maintenance of state schools by which learning was fostered. The emperor was aided by a council which included certain noble officials at court together with the heads of his six principal departments: civil service, finance and revenue, rites (state religion), defense, punishments (including penal law), and public works. The officials stationed in the prefectures sent their reports directly to these heads. Meanwhile the magistrate over each sub-prefecture had direct supervision over the villages in his jurisdiction. His three duties were to collect



*This is a model in pottery of a two-wheeled oxcart from the T'ang period. The high wheels are evidently designed for traveling on muddy roads and through treacherous streams.*

revenues, supervise public works, and maintain the peace.

**Government regulations and revenues.** Because agriculture was the chief source of revenue, the government was vitally concerned in it. Therefore the population, with the exception of the official class and the townspeople, was divided into five age groups. Land was assigned to adults and boys over 18 to cultivate as tenants of the state. There were two requirements of tenancy—rent and services. Included in the rent was the payment of rice, silk, cloth, or silver. As service the tenant had to devote some twenty days of hard labor to public works. The government tried to be equitable by remitting taxes and services in bad years in accordance with the loss incurred. Whenever the number of inhabitants of one village was insufficient to cultivate the neighboring lands, the excess area was given over to another village with more people.

The government measured land then (as now) by the *mu*: an area 240 paces by 1 pace. One hundred of these *mu* make up one *ching*, the usual area allotted to the adult farmer. The merchants in the towns could not register as state tenants but paid taxes according to the amount of property they held in the city, while the coolies in the towns, owning no property, were not made to pay any taxes. Thus we can see that the tax system in T'ang times was based, at least in large measure, on the theory of ability to pay.



*This scene from Hsia Kuei's painting, "Ten Thousand Miles of the Yangtze," shows life along the great river and its banks. A precariously-perched crew pilots the river boat through the rapids. Two travelers switch their goggle-eyed pack-animals away from the stream. The Sung painting is a detail from a long silk scroll.*

The grain used in paying taxes was carried up to Changan, the capital city. In the period of which we are speaking, this capital was some 30 square miles in area and must have had a population of about 1,000,000. The trouble caused by transporting the grain up the river rapids may in part account for the abandonment of Changan as the capital city after T'ang times. The imperial government also had revenues accruing from monopolies on the minting of money, iron, copper (later), and salt, as well as from taxes on rice, wine, and tea. Altogether the government was efficiently run, and the people as a whole were contented.<sup>8</sup>

**T'ang prosperity.** China prospered both physically and intellectually during the reigns of T'ai Tsung and his immediate successors. It exported quantities of rice, silk, corn, and spices. Silk factories employed tens of thousands of workers. Li Po, writing in the eighth century to a friend in a distant city, indicates the prosperity he saw:

I traveled on and came to Pe-liang and stayed for months.  
What hospitality! What squandering of money!

Red jade cups and rare dainty food on tables inlaid with green gems!  
You made me so rapturously drunk that I had no thought of returning.<sup>9</sup>

T'ai Tsung encouraged the drama and is regarded today as its patron saint. The Imperial Library contained 54,000 volumes, and so prolific was the literary output that one Chinese critic says, "At this age, whoever was a man was a poet."

The glories which we associate with this dynasty centered about the capital city where scholarship, literature, and the arts abounded. But most of the people were carrying on their daily tasks far removed from Changan and its brilliant court life. These people never ventured far from the village of their birth but guided their children in the ancient traditions of the Chinese family and won from the soil of their fathers a difficult existence.

**T'ai Tsung's successors.** The death of T'ai Tsung in 650 was followed by universal grief, and rightly so, for his son was not of his caliber. The new emperor was little more than a puppet in the hands of his father's former

concubine, whom he married and ultimately made his empress. Known as the "Warrior Empress," this brilliant but unscrupulous woman ruled China with an iron hand for more than half a century (654-705) until a year before her death at 81. Under her orders Chinese armies conquered neighboring countries and expanded the frontiers of the empire.

From 713 to 756 China was ruled by Hsuan Tsung, popularly known as the "Brilliant Emperor." He himself was not so remarkable as T'ai Tsung, but his reign saw the flowering of a brilliant group of poets and painters. Hsuan Tsung started his reign as a puritan but fell under the spell of the "Chinese Cleopatra," the Lady Yang, concubine of his eighteenth son. The court was transformed into a center of splendor, luxury, and art. Such poets as Li Po wrote masterpieces to celebrate the glories of the Lady Yang, whom the emperor fondly called "The Great Pure One."

With the passing of Hsuan Tsung, the T'ang dynasty began to decline steadily, as incapable monarchs assumed the yellow robe. Rebellions, governmental bankruptcy, and universal poverty all contributed to the extinction of a dynasty whose extensive empire (see map, page 284) was powerful enough to hold in check even the Tatar tribes far to the north.

**Poetry in the golden age.** The T'ang period has been remembered as a golden era because of its poetry and painting. The eighteenth-century Manchu emperors of China ordered a collection to be made of T'ang poetry. Their anthology consisted of dozens of volumes containing 48,900 poems by 2300 poets. This is the amount which survived nearly a thousand years of turbulent history; how much more good poetry perished during the centuries can only be guessed. The greatest poets were Li Po and Tu Fu, both of whom are noted for their restraint in verse and lack of restraint in personal behavior.

**Li Po (705-762).** Li Po has been summarized by Tu Fu in the following couplet:

As for Li Po, give him a jugful of wine,  
And he will write a hundred poems.<sup>10</sup>

A native of a far western province, Li Po was an extremely precocious child, having mastered the books of Confucius at the age of ten. At twenty he had received his doctor's degree, and his fame brought him to the imperial court

where he was engaged to glorify the Lady Yang. Unfortunately she misinterpreted one of his poems, and the bibulous poet was turned out of the palace. He wandered from place to place, starving occasionally, drinking frequently, and composing immortal stanzas endlessly. Despite his humor and elegance of phrase, Li Po has suffused his poetry with a gentle melancholy over the transience of the pleasures of this mortal world. One legend of his death tells of his being carried on a dolphin toward the world of the immortals. Another story maintains that he died by falling into a river while in a state of drunken exaltation during which he leaned over the bank to embrace the moon.

Though the circumstance of his death is hazy, his poetry is tangible enough. His description of "An Encounter in the Field" helps explain the increasing popularity of Li Po's verse:

Came an amorous rider,  
Trampling the fallen flowers of the road.  
The dangling end of his crop  
Brushes a passing carriage of five-colored  
clouds.  
The jeweled curtain is raised,  
A beautiful woman smiles within—  
"That is my house," she whispers,  
Pointing to a pink house beyond.<sup>11</sup>

Written in another vein is "In the Mountains," whose few lines express the restrained but deep love which the Chinese have for nature:

Why do I live among the green mountains?  
I laugh and answer not, my soul is serene:  
It dwells in another heaven and earth belonging  
to no man.  
The peach trees are in flower, and the water  
flows on . . .<sup>12</sup>

Li Po also wrote a poem whose subject matter is apparently often appropriate. The poignancy of the lines cannot fail to arouse a universal sympathy wherever they are read.

'Tis December. Lo, the pensive maid of  
Yu-chow!  
She will not sing, she will not smile; her moth-  
eyebrows are disheveled.  
She stands by the gate and watches the way-  
farers pass,  
Remembering him who snatched his sword  
and went to save the border land,





SILK EMBROIDERY, T'ANG DYNASTY

Him who suffered bitterly in the cold beyond  
the Great Wall,  
Him who fell in the battle and will never  
come back.

In the tiger-striped gold case for her keeping  
There remains a pair of white-feathered arrows  
Amid the cobwebs and dust gathered of long  
years—

Oh, empty tokens of love, too sad to look upon!  
She takes them out and burns them to ashes.

By building a dam one may stop the flow of  
the Yellow River,  
But who can assuage the grief of her heart  
when it snows and the north wind blows?<sup>13</sup>

And we can catch from the following partially  
quoted poem the nostalgia of the exile.

In the land of Wu the mulberry leaves are  
green,  
And thrice the silkworms have gone to sleep.  
In East Luh where my family stay,  
I wonder who is sowing those fields of ours.

I cannot be back in time for the spring doings,  
Yet I can help nothing, traveling on the river.

The south wind blowing wafts my homesick  
spirit

And carries it up to the front of our familiar  
tavern.

There I see a peach tree on the east side of  
the house

With thick leaves and branches waving in the  
blue mist.

It is the tree I planted before my parting three  
years ago.

The peach tree has grown now as tall as the  
tavern roof,

While I have wandered about without re-  
turning.<sup>14</sup>

*Tu Fu (712-770).* Tu Fu was the youthful  
companion of Li Po. He lived a life of mixed  
bliss and hardship, and from his many experi-  
ences he wrote a large body of exquisite poetry.  
Li Po has been termed the people's poet be-  
cause of the popular appeal of his subject mat-  
ter, while Tu Fu's mastery of the technical  
form and his craftsmanship have earned for  
him the award of being the poet's poet.

## THE EXCURSION

## I

How delightful, at sunset, to loosen the boat!  
A light wind is slow to raise the waves.

Deep in the bamboo grove, the guests linger;  
The lotus-flowers are pure and bright in the  
cool evening air.

The young nobles stir the ice-water;  
The Beautiful Ones wash the lotus-roots,  
whose fibers are like silk threads.

A layer of clouds above our heads is black.  
It will certainly rain, which impels me to write  
this poem.

## II

The rain comes, soaking the mats upon which  
we are sitting.

A hurrying wind strikes the bow of the boat.  
The rose-red rouge of the ladies from Yueh is  
wet;

The Yen beauties are anxious about their king-  
fisher-eyebrows.

We throw out a rope and draw in to the slop-  
ing bank.

We tie the boat to the willow-trees.

We roll up the curtains and watch the floating  
wave-flowers.

Our return is different from our setting out.

The wind whistles and blows in great gusts.  
By the time we reach the shore, it seems as  
though the Fifth Month were Autumn.<sup>15</sup>

In estimating Chinese poetry, we should keep in mind several important facts. It is almost impossible to translate this poetry into any other language because of the subtlety of meaning of the Chinese characters in which the poetry is written. Again, where we see the lines as very free verse, we must remember that Chinese poetry is really rigid and formalistic in its pattern. Finally, Chinese poetry is restrained, urbane, and mature. The Chinese do not believe that one can write thousands of lines and still be poetic, because poetry to them is a momentary ecstasy and inspiration. That is why their poems are short and subjective. Many modern western poets believe that poetry must be imbued with the same subjective spirit which the Chinese as early as two thousand years ago strove to capture.

**T'ang art.** The T'ang dynasty was the formative period of Chinese painting. During T'ang times there lived the great Wu Tao-tzu, whom the Japanese regard as the father of their painting. He furthered the development of a national school independent of foreign influences.

Little remains of T'ang painting. There is evidence of Buddhist influence in the silk embroidery adapted from paintings of the period (compare the illustration on the opposite page with the painting on page 265). The exaggerated scale, with the small kneeling figures at the bottom, is typically Indian, as is the flat, broad treatment of the figures. But the manner in which line is used (note the garments on the two side figures) is essentially Chinese.

Sculpture in the T'ang period developed along more national lines, but Buddhist subject matter was still used. The Bodhisattva above shows that a distinctively Chinese interpretation of these religious figures had developed. Compare this figure with the Buddha of Sarnath, page 264, and with religious sculpture in early medieval Europe (the Chartres figures, page 389). The tools which the artists have used to express their ideas are the same—chisel and stone—but their finished works are essentially different in spirit. The Chartres figures are architectural, while the Bodhisattva, although probably designed for a specific place,



CHINESE BODHISATTVA, T'ANG DYNASTY

is free-standing. In both the artist has composed to bring out the essential features. In the T'ang statue the diagonal line is repeated throughout the drapery to emphasize the graceful curve of the body, whereas the opposite is true in the long, narrow, straight Gothic figures. Comparisons such as these help one to appreciate the manner in which artists express different cultures with the same tools—a block of stone and a chisel, or a brush and ink or paint. Chinese artists were also proficient in other types of sculpture, particularly in the depiction of grotesque mythological dragons and ferocious dogs. Pottery and porcelain were also produced, of so excellent a quality that they are referred to by the poets of the age.

**Contact with the Arabs.** Sea commerce expanded. Traders came from India and the Arabs established an important colony at Canton. It was estimated that at the end of the eighth century about four thousand foreign families dwelt at the capital. The Arabs seem to have introduced the poppy along with the

jasmine, rose, and henna into China at this time. The Chinese, while making use of opium for medical purposes prior to 973, did not smoke it until the sixteenth century. The Taoists had always evinced an interest in alchemy, a study which continued to hold interest in the T'ang era. It appears highly possible that the Arabs, in control of the sea and land routes leading to the Far East, were the chief transmitters of Chinese alchemy to Europe.

**The invention of printing.** In T'ang China printing, one of mankind's most priceless inventions, was developed. At least as far back as the Shang dynasty the writing brush or pencil had been invented, and in the first century A.D. the Chinese invented paper. As early as the second century A.D. a court eunuch announced to his emperor the invention of paper. It is not known whether this eunuch was himself the inventor of paper, but at any rate he has been made its official patron. Unfortunately, he became involved in some court intrigue, was ordered to stand trial, and (in the words of the chronicler) "went home, took a bath, combed his hair, put on his best robes, and drank poison."<sup>16</sup>

Buddhism acted as the driving force behind the invention of printing. The Buddhist monks in China felt that they would acquire merit by duplicating passages from their sacred scripture for mass distribution. And so, probably in the first half of the eighth century,

block printing was invented—printing from an image cut in a wooden block. The first known block print is from Japan and dates from 770. The invention must have been brought to the islands from China some time before then.

The first printed book, however, came from China itself. It is the famous *Diamond Sutra*, discovered by a mendicant priest in a cave in the far west of China. The *Diamond Sutra* consists of six sheets of text inscribed with a woodcut, pasted together to form a roll some 16 feet long. The sheets are each two and a half feet by almost one foot in size and must have been printed from very large blocks. The Buddhist text was obviously produced as a meritorious act. At the end of the work is written the statement: "Printed on May 11, 868, by Wang Chieh, for free general distribution, in order in deep reverence to perpetuate the memory of his parents."<sup>17</sup>

The Chinese used their new invention not only to print books but also, in the tenth century, to issue paper money on a large scale and to print playing cards. These cards found their way either directly or indirectly from China to Europe in the fourteenth century. Because the Chinese language is made up of separate characters (some 40,000), China found it advantageous to rely principally upon block printing. However, the Chinese were the first to invent movable type, which the Koreans and Japanese used to good advantage later.

### *Civilization versus Barbarism (906-1368)*

**The "Five Small Dynasties."** The fall of the T'ang dynasty left China in another of her periodic eras of internal anarchy and external attack. From 906 to 960 A.D. five weak and short-lived dynasties contended for the imperial rule and are known as the Five Little Ages. The monarchs were anything but conspicuous for model reigns. They did not prevent the central authority from disintegrating and could not cope with the fresh wave of barbarian attacks on the north and northeast. The tribes who assailed the frontiers included the Khitan Tatars, who soon changed their name to Liao, or Iron Tatars. But the period of disorder came to an end for the time being with the accession of a new dynasty, the Sung, in 960.

**The Sungs (960-1279).** The name Sung comes from a district in Honan over which the

first emperor of the line had ruled. He was a general picked as monarch by his soldiers. He and his successors had the constant problem of trying to repel the ever-surging Tatar invaders either by force or bribery.

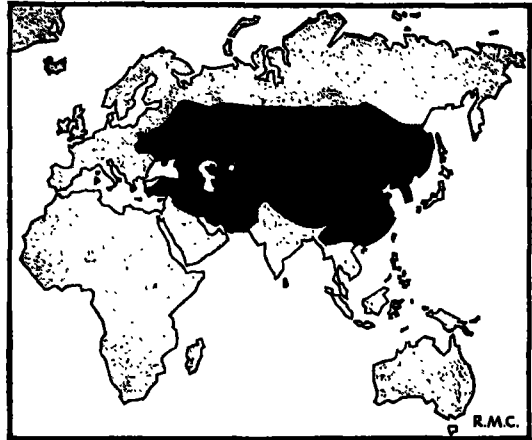
The first Sung ruler died in 976, and it was another three years before his successor was able to unify all China under Sung control. In 998 a new emperor ascended the throne and in a few years started the bad example of paying tribute to the Tatars in an effort to buy them off. As time went on, the barbarians increased their demands so that in 1043 China was agreeing to pay each year two hundred fifty-five thousand ounces of silver and the same number of pieces of silk and packages of tea. An emperor in the twelfth century hit upon the idea of hiring the Chin (Gold) Tatars to defeat the Iron Tatars. This the Chins did,

only to turn about and conquer the Chinese, so that from 1127 the Sung lost control over all territory north of the Yangtze. The son of the emperor who had hired the Chins established a capital in the south, first at Nanking and then at Hangchow. China for the next century was really two empires (see map below).

**The Tatars.** Then arose one of the most terrifying characters in the world's history, Genghis Khan (1162-1227). A group of tribes broke away from the Gold Tatars, calling themselves Mongols. Genghis Khan devoted his talents to the uniting of the Mongols, so that by 1206 he was conqueror of all the territories and peoples in Mongolia. He now overran northern China, driving out the Chins and sacking Peking and murdering its inhabitants in 1214. In 1216 the ruthless leader gained southern Manchuria, and in 1219, leaving the conquest of the Sung empire to the south for his lieutenants to accomplish, he swung westward. He pillaged central Asia, invaded India, ordered his armies across Persia and Asia Minor, and had them push on as far as the Danube. The taking of Novgorod started the subjection of Russia, so that in 1238 the Mongols held it in tribute. Genghis Khan died in 1227, but his successors conquered first the Chinese rulers in the north and then the Sung dynasty south of the Yangtze, despite heroic opposition. With the accession of the well-known Kublai Khan in 1259, we can say that the Sung dynasty was overthrown by the new Mongol dynasty, although the Sung continued to resist for another twenty years.

**Sung thought.** Though the Sung era was one of political tragedy in the history of China, it represented great achievement in other fields. Where, under the T'angs, thought and art, letters and scholarship were cosmopolitan, the tone of the Sung period was nationalistic, a result, perhaps of the foreign menace. But it did not limit thinkers and artists; it was an era extremely rich in painting and philosophy.

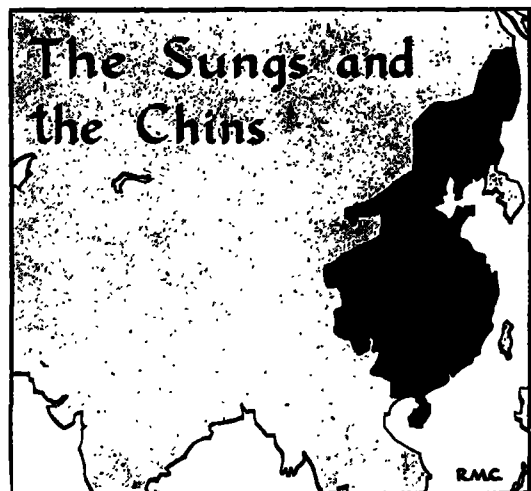
The Sung philosophers created what has been termed a period of Neo-Confucianism, for they interpreted the great sage anew, adding portions of Buddhistic thought. We recall that the teachings of Confucius aimed at the creation of a workable code of ethics for everyday living. But with the passing of time Confucianism became a national cult whose followers interpreted the teachings of

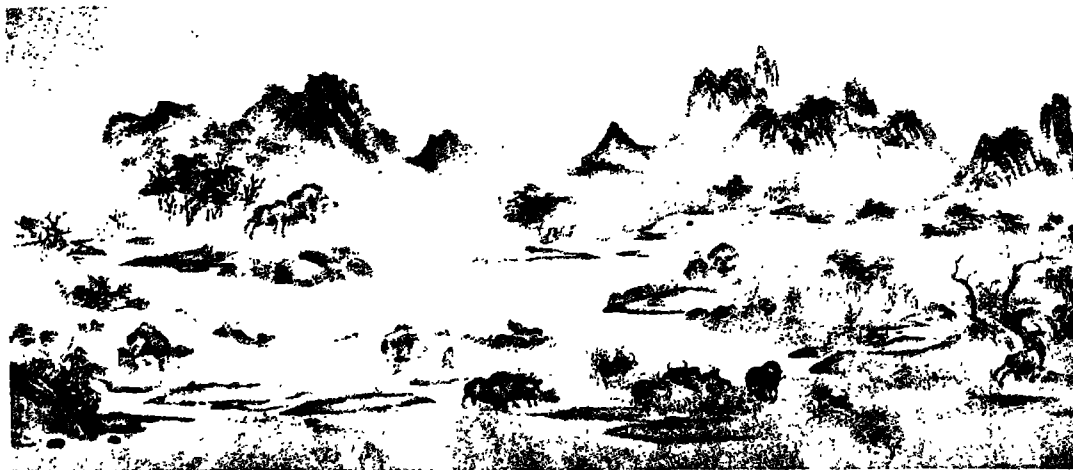


*The Mongol empire stretched all the way across Asia and threatened to engulf Europe.*

Confucius to explain the universe itself. Buddhist thought had much to do with the transformation, for Buddha had taught the doctrine that the universe was governed by cosmic law. His concept was added to that of Confucius, which stressed the importance of moral law, and the result was a new interpretation of Confucianism—Neo-Confucianism.

**Wang An-shih.** The eleventh century produced one of China's most fascinating figures, the philosopher and socialist statesman Wang An-shih (1021-1086). A brilliant scholar who read everything he could get his hands on, he tried to bring China "up to date" by throwing overboard her numberless traditions. In 1069, becoming one of the emperor's state councilors, he began to put some of his pet





LANDSCAPE WITH BUFFALOES—DETAIL OF A SCROLL BY THE PAINTER CHIANG T'SAN, SUNG DYNASTY

theories into practice. Wang An-shih stated that the ruler was responsible for providing his subjects with the necessities of life and that to accomplish this goal "the state should take the entire management of commerce, industry, and agriculture into its own hands, with a view to succoring the working classes and preventing them from being ground into the dust by the rich."<sup>18</sup> He abolished the practice of forced labor, created engineering projects for preventing floods, planned pensions for the aged, unemployed, and poor, modernized the examination system and education, appointed boards in all the districts to regulate wages and commodity prices, and made the rich pay the taxes, while exempting the poor.

Corruption, conservatism, opposition from the rich, and impracticality all combined to defeat Wang An-shih's extraordinary project. However, it is amazing to see how completely modern in his theories the philosopher was. The platform of the modern Chinese Communist Party is practically identical with the schemes of a man who lived nine hundred years ago. Planned economy is nothing new.

**Sung painting.** The culmination of Chinese art came in the Sung era. Emperor Hui Tsung (1101-1126) was a collector and patron as well as being himself a painter. His collection of paintings included five thousand works. But although he made his court an art center, Hui Tsung proved unable to cope with the unartistically minded Tatars, who carried him into exile in 1126 and destroyed nearly all the treasures which he had collected. Altogether

there have been recorded the names of eight hundred painters from the Sung era. The "Ten Thousand Miles of the Yangtze" (page 286) and the painting above are two examples of Sung painting.

Chinese painting made no attempt to be realistic. The painter believed that days of meditation of one scene would reveal the essential mood to the artist. When this observation had been carried on as long as necessary, the artist would paint the scene without looking at it. In this way he felt he was finding the most permanent aspects of the scene, not merely recording a fleeting impression made by light or shade or varying weather. The Chinese painter believed in the simplest statement, and used as few lines as possible for each object. The painting above shows the manner in which the Chinese painter interpreted landscape with an economy of line and shading. Notice how unimportant man is as compared to the spacious beauty of nature around him. Compare this with the Renaissance interpretation of landscape in such a painting as "Pastoral Concert," page 450. There humans are all-important, and nature is subordinated.

The use of ink on silk meant that the painter had to be sure of every line of the painting, for once his brush stroke was effected, no changes could be made. The required degree of skill thus took years of practice. The use of the brush for Chinese writing gave painters excellent training. The same skillful use of the brush can be seen in the painted pottery.

Further insight into the philosophy of Chinese art may be obtained by examining the Chinese term for "landscape." Translated literally, it signifies "mountain and water." For centuries the Chinese artist has sought to extract from these elements the essence of life, just as Taoist thinking has tried to find the answer to the riddle of life in nature.

**Pottery.** In the Sung era pottery was highly developed. Shapes were extremely simple, and decoration was accomplished by glaze, brush work, relief, or incised line. Glaze is a mineral mixture ground into powder, combined with water and sprayed or painted on the dish. When fused by the heat of the kiln it becomes a lustrous coating, either transparent or opaque. Vessels may be glazed a solid color or designs painted with a brush, or lines scratched into the surface and covered with glaze. Porcelain, used often in the Sung period, is fired at a very high temperature, and is so thin as to be nearly transparent. The Sung artists knew that the beauty of a dish lay in its shape, and they used very restrained decoration to emphasize or complement the form. Notice the way in which the lines of the relief on the bowl below emphasize the shape and repeat it rhythmically.

**The Yuan, or Mongol, dynasty.** The year 1279 is the time from which the Mongol, or Yuan, dynasty is reckoned because, although Kublai Khan became the Great Khan nearly twenty years earlier, it was not until 1279 that

the last Sung pretender was eradicated. We are indebted for our knowledge of the Khan to one who is perhaps the world's most famous traveler and the author of the world's most outstanding travelogue—Marco Polo.

**Marco Polo's account of Cathay.** As a youth, Marco had accompanied his father and uncle eastward to the court of Kublai Khan. He lived in China for about ten years, enjoying the hospitality of the emperor, with whom he was in high favor. Three years after the Polos returned to Venice, Marco was captured and imprisoned during a war with Genoa, and in prison he dictated to a fellow prisoner his adventures in the orient, the first account of the Far East by a European to receive widespread attention and to influence western thought to the present day. So incredulous were contemporary Venetians of the wonders Marco had seen in China (whose civilization was superior to anything in thirteenth-century Europe) that they nicknamed him Messer Milione on account of his numberless "fables."

We can scarcely blame them when we contrast the squalor of medieval Europe with such eastern wonders as a city the size of Peking, which was twenty-four miles square yet whose streets were "so broad and straight that from one gate to another [was] visible"; a town in southern China, which had twelve thousand stone bridges and four thousand public baths; the magnificent messenger system of the Khan in which stations were



OLIVE-GREEN SUNG BOWL WITH CHRYSANTHEMUM PATTERN IN RELIEF

posted every twenty-five to thirty miles with horses for the swift dispatch of messages, so that "on all these posts taken together there are more than 300,000 horses kept up"; the great marble palaces of the Khan and his large granaries stocked against possible famine; and the use of black stones (coal) for purposes of heating. Obviously many a sober-minded European would doubt that stones could burn, as Marco insisted. "If you supply the fire with them at night, and see that they are well kindled, you will find them still alight in the morning; and they make such capital fuel that no other is used throughout the country. It is true that they have plenty of wood also, but they do not burn it, because these stones burn better and cost less."

**Kublai Khan as emperor.** According to Marco Polo, Kublai Khan was a most remarkable ruler. During his reign Mongol power extended across Asia from China to the Dnieper (see map, page 291), while by 1278 Kublai had achieved the considerable feat of gaining control of all China itself. He realized that the people whom he had conquered possessed a culture superior to his own, and he ruled tolerantly and wisely. He built public highways and granaries to store surpluses of food, revised the calendar, aided the sick, orphans, and old scholars through state care, and built a beautiful new capital at and near old Peking. Peace and order were established throughout his vast empire, a feat so remarkable that one scholar has stated, "It was indeed marvelous that, through the protection of one man, an

Italian trader could journey unmolested from the Black Sea to Peking and back again—a situation which had never existed before and which disappeared with the passing of Kublai Khan."<sup>10</sup> Kublai also deepened and extended the Grand Canal, welcomed new religious systems, and patronized the arts with a dazzling munificence.

**The drama and the novel.** We might expect that a Tatar dynasty would not support advance in purely Chinese culture, but this was not the case. Although the Emperor Hsuan Tsung of the T'ang dynasty is regarded today as the patron saint of the drama because of his early contributions, it was in the Yuan, or Mongol, dynasty that Chinese drama became firmly established as an art. *The Hundred Plays of the Yuan Dynasty* include several works of genuine literary merit. The Mongols introduced the novel, a form of literature which is considered by the Chinese to be not intellectually respectable. However, they still delight in reading a tale that may well have been written at this time—the most famous novel in Chinese literature, *The Story of the Three Kingdoms*.

**Decline of the Mongols.** The Yuan, or Mongol, dynasty declined after the passing of Kublai, because of the succession of weak rulers and the gradual assimilation of the Mongols by the numerically superior and anti-foreign Chinese. Finally in 1368 an ex-Buddhist monk entered Peking and established the Ming dynasty as a result of having led a victorious rebellion.

## *The Evolution of Japan*

**Japanese geography.** The Japanese do not use the term "Japan" to designate their native land. Instead they call it *Nippon* or, in poetry especially, *Yamato*, "the Mountain Portal." Yamato has been immortalized thus by an eighteenth-century poet:

If one should ask you  
What is the heart  
Of Island Yamato—  
It is the mountain cherry blossom  
Which exhales its perfume in the  
morning sun <sup>20</sup>

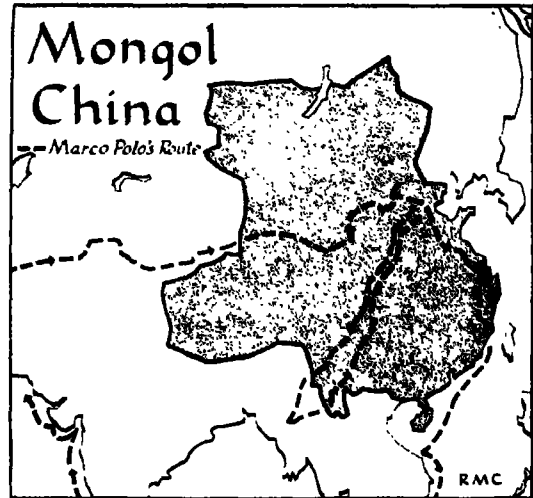
The Japanese are passionately fond of the natural beauties of their homeland, although the geographical make-up of the island empire

may not deserve such homage. In the archipelago are 4223 islands of varying size. The principal one is Honshu, which today contains the main cities of Japan, including the historic capital of the kingdom, Kyoto. On Honshu also is situated the symbol by which Japan is known all over the world, the holy mountain Fujiyama. Altogether about six hundred islands of the archipelago are inhabited. Today they possess a population of more than 72,000,000. This figure does not include the millions living in Korea or other parts of the empire, whose size is subject to change from time to time. The support of such a large population on an area whose resources are below the people's needs constitutes Japan's major

problem. Only 17% of the islands' soil is arable. A large proportion of the rice annually consumed has to be imported. Other important crops include rye, soy beans, barley, and wheat. Fish, which abound off the coasts, supply a large portion of the Japanese diet. Japan has few mineral resources and is deficient in iron, coal, and oil deposits, essential to large-scale manufacturing. Added to these deficiencies is the fact that Japan has been subjected to recurring earthquakes, typhoons, and tidal waves. But disaster and want have never prevented the Japanese people from making an annual visit to a grove of cherry trees in blossom; misfortune has not kept them from writing exquisite poetry about the beauties of the chrysanthemums, the trailing wistaria, and the blue lakes.

**Origins of the Japanese people.** The traditional account of the origins of the Japanese people is highly interesting—and highly fictitious. The first emperor is supposed to have been descended from the Sun Goddess. He is known as Jimmu Tenno, and, according to tradition, became emperor in 660 B.C. Ever since the reign of Jimmu Tenno there has been only one ruling family to preside over the destinies of Nippon. Thus this royal house can claim to have the oldest unbroken line of any in the world.

The historical account of the origins of Nippon is more prosaic but still interesting. Where the Japanese people came from is not definitely known. They are a mixed race. In ancient times the archipelago witnessed many immigrations from the Asiatic mainland and probably from such islands lying to the south as Borneo, Java, and the Philippines. Today there are racial similarities between certain Japanese and people in southern China and Indo-China, while others are akin to the inhabitants of Korea and Manchuria. The most primitive people living in Japan today are an interesting aboriginal group called Ainu. At present they live mainly on the island of Hokkaido, although at one time they inhabited the other principal islands of the archipelago. Ainu artifacts have been found which may be six thousand years old. The Ainu people, now only about twenty thousand in number, are low-statured, hairy, with eyes not almond-shaped like the Japanese, thick nosed, and with rather high cheekbones. These aborigines were a branch of the original pop-



ulation of the Japanese islands whom the invading Japanese either drove from the southern islands or absorbed into their own people. Japan had a Stone Age, for there are artifacts to prove it. The Stone Age in Japan may have persisted as late as 1000 B.C.

**The Chinese influence.** It seems certain that during the days of the Chou dynasty in China (1122-1225 B.C.) successive immigrations to Japan took place, possibly from northeast Asia by way of Korea. These invaders exterminated the Neolithic inhabitants or drove them into remote districts, and planted their own cul-





ture. They brought with them the use of metal. Chinese influence probably predominated at this time and became even more powerful as time elapsed. Not later than the first century B.C. there existed a strong outpost of Chinese culture in Korea, and unquestionably traffic existed between that area and the Japanese islands. China's culture at this time ranked with any in the entire world, and the inhabitants of Nippon did not remain unaffected by its splendor.

Although the Japanese profess to trace the history of their ruling house from 660 B.C., we know little or nothing about the island kingdom until the sixth century A.D. Koreans in large numbers were then crossing over from the mainland, and Japan was enriched by the advent of artisans, potters, weavers, painters, and farmers skilled in agriculture and the breeding of silkworms. The educated immigrants, scribes, and accountants brought over the Chinese language with its character script, of inestimable value for Japanese culture. Then in 552 Buddhism came from Korea and in time grew to be the principal faith of the islands (together with Shintoism).

The spread of Buddhism in Japan was due largely to the propagandizing efforts of Prince Shotoku Taishi, revered today for his humanitarianism and vision. When Shotoku died in 621, the year before Mohammed was forced to make his Hegira from Mecca to Medina, it was said that all people mourned him as though he were a close kinsman. Buddhism stimulated the refinement of manners and morals and at the same time introduced many new artistic ideas from India and China. Early art in Japan was to a great extent stimulated by Chinese art. The T'ang dynasty had commenced its age of enlightenment. Students were journeying westward to learn more about the country of which a Chinese priest said in 622 at the court in Japan: "The land of Great T'ang is a wonderful country, whose laws are complete and fixed. Constant communication should be kept up with it."<sup>21</sup>

**Evolution of Japanese government.** In 645 an important document in Japanese constitutional history was set forth—the Great Reform. According to its provisions the ruler of Yamato was no longer a weak chieftain with only nominal suzerainty over the heads of the various clans, but the real emperor of Japan who in theory owned every acre of land in his em-

pire. In 702 a law code, the Tai-ho ("Great Treasure") was set forth, founded on Chinese antecedents. Dealing with a multitude of subjects, including duties of officials, services to the gods, the land, taxation, salaries, army and frontier defense, stores of rice and grain, arrest of criminals, funerals and mourning, and other social topics, the Tai-ho stressed that all persons, irrespective of birth or position, owed equal allegiance to the government. This concept of duty is still completely engrained in the Japanese. There is no sacrifice which a citizen is not willing to make for Nippon.

**The Nara period (710-794).** The period from 710 to 794 is known as the Nara period because the beautiful city of Nara was made the capital of Japan. At Nara can be found the *Daibutsu*, a huge bronze image of Buddha whose casting began in 747. The Daibutsu—"Buddha of Infinite Compassion"—is 53 feet high (the little finger is nearly as long as a man is tall) and required over a million pounds of metal. Travelers from all over the world have visited the great shrine. Buddhism continued to flourish in the Nara period, and poetry was popular. The verse forms in which Nara poetry was couched originally came from China and were used by the refined court people to express moods and attitudes. The favorite pattern was the *tanka*, a rigid and conventional form. These poems made use of puns, double meanings, and classical allusions.

**The Heian period (794-1156).** In 794 a new capital, the political center until 1869, was built at Kyoto. Kyoto, "City of Peace," is historically perhaps the richest city in all Japan. The period lasting down to 1156 is known as the Heian period. It is an age noted particularly for its literature, owing largely to the invention of two new types of phonetic writing during the eighth and ninth centuries. Syllabic in make-up, both are natural developments of the Chinese character system. Much of the best Heian literature was written by feminine authors, the most famous diary of the age, the *Pillow Book*, being composed by a court lady, Sei Shonagon. Apparently courtiers and ladies wrote poems about trivial matters in their idle hours. They admired the cherry blossoms in the spring, arranged flowers, and concerned themselves with the painstaking details of socially correct color scheme in dress. The common people led no such idyllic life, but instead toiled at raising

rice, tea, and cotton. Fishing furnished a livelihood for many of the poorer people, although the influence of Buddhism, which forbids the killing and eating of flesh and fish, must have seriously curtailed the fishing industry.

**Social structure of medieval Japan.** The populace of medieval Japan was divided into two groups: the free and the non-free. The highest members of the free group were the heads of the great clans, all of whom bore important rank at court. The lesser nobles were not eligible to occupy the state's highest offices, but devoted their talents to the professions, the arts, or warfare. The lowest of the free people were the peasant, small landholders and members of certain guilds, who paid taxes in grain and labor. The guildsmen followed such occupations as smith, armorer, and lacquer-worker. Among the non-free people were both public and private slaves. The public slaves worked on the land, from which they received a food ration, or were engaged in such menial tasks as scavenging and grave-digging. The private slaves belonged to the households of wealthy nobles and could be sold or given away. At this time the slaves, made up in large measure of Korean and Ainu captives as well as political offenders, comprised one tenth to one fifth of the total population.

**The shogun.** At various times during Japan's early history a virtual military dictatorship was established, with supreme power given to an officer called the *shogun*—"generalissimo." The title was usually bestowed upon some deserving soldier, and only for the duration of the national crisis. But upon one of Japan's greatest statesmen, Yoritomo (1146-1198) the title was conferred for life, and to him also was given the right to name his successor. Yoritomo established a form of government, the *bakufu* (army headquarters), which existed for almost seven hundred years. Henceforth the *shogun* as military commander took over the control of justice, law, and finance. He appointed constables and land stewards over every province to prevent rebellion. Thus the *shogun* became the real ruler of Japan. Although he continued to pay the utmost

respect to the emperor and governed at a discreet distance from the imperial court, the principal power in Nippon belonged to him and not to the emperor. This was the state of affairs down to the revolution of 1867.

**"The Great Wind."** In 1260 Kublai Khan came to the throne of China. Hearing reports about the mythical wealth of Nippon, the Great Khan decided to extend his rule to Japan. He made extensive plans for the invasion, gathering over 100,000 men in 350 ships. The stoical Japanese prepared to meet a danger fully as great as that faced by Elizabethan England when the Spanish Armada sailed northward. But, as befell the Armada, nature came to the aid of the Japanese. A tempest—henceforth known as "the Great Wind"—dispersed the ships of the invaders, in 1281. The fleet was scattered and thousands of men perished or were cast on Japanese soil to be captured by the natives as slaves. Yet so great was the danger that the Nipponese never forgot it, and it is said that even in recent times the Japanese mother would ask her crying child, "Do you think the Mogu are coming?"<sup>22</sup>

**The Hojo period.** The thirteenth century in Japan belongs to what is called the Hojo period, noted for its literature, art, and social customs. Painting continued to be mostly portraiture, concerned with depicting court figures. Caricature appeared, however, and has continued throughout Japanese painting. During the Hojo period official recognition was given the *bushido*, the unwritten code of chivalry and honor as practiced by the *samurai* (warrior nobility). The *bushido* stressed courage, fortitude, composure, benevolence, politeness, and loyalty. It also approved the custom of self-immolation known as *seppuku* (popularly known as *hara-kari*). *Seppuku* was not mere suicide but a ceremonial by which the warrior could expiate crimes, escape disgrace, or prove his loyalty. There is a story that a policeman once committed *seppuku* because he had the misfortune to misdirect an imperial procession through a village street. These customs reveal the stoical indifference to death which the Japanese people possess.

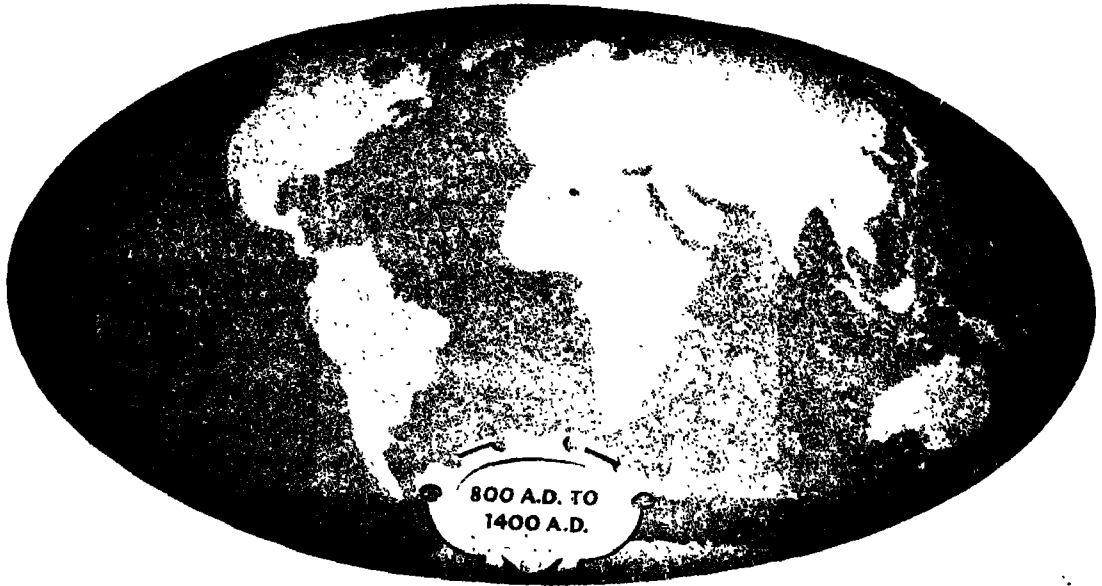
### Summary

We have reviewed the history of the great and dynamic Chinese people over a period of sixteen hundred years. We have seen the rise and fall of more than a dozen dynasties, each with its individual problems and contributions, yet all prolonging the continuous

sweep of cultural traits which make Chinese civilization unique. Likewise, we have noticed how various dynasties have been outstanding in particular ways. The Ch'ins unified a number of warring feudal states into one great empire. The Hans extended Chinese territory and witnessed the coming of Buddhism, the invention of paper, and a flourishing literature. The T'ang period was marked especially by the rich flowering of poetry, painting, and sculpture, and the invention of printing. The Sungs, despite a period of political chaos and Tatar invasion, contributed to a resurgence of Confucian philosophy and saw painting and pottery reach new artistic heights. The Yuan, or Mongol, dynasty patronized the arts and helped develop the drama and fiction writing. It is true that the Mongol dynasty was foreign in origin, but its rulers adopted Chinese customs and aided rather than retarded the expansion of native culture.

One fact is preeminent when a summation of Chinese civilization is attempted. It is the vitality of Chinese temperament. Even as the Chinese can biologically assimilate other races without losing their own characteristics (and have done so all through their history), so in their culture they assimilate foreign customs without seeming to impair their own. Physically, the Chinese are a strong people who *en masse* appear to be impervious to racial degeneration and who are indisputably among the most productive groups in the world today. They have always lived simple lives close to the soil, which they cherish deeply, and for that reason, if for no other, they are strong traditionalists who desire to perpetuate those cultural habits which have made them enduring as a race. Despite the rise and fall of dynasties and the periodic invasion of barbarian tribes from the west and north the Chinese people until the most recent times have led much the same physical existence and enjoyed the same social customs as their ancestors who died over two thousand years ago. They are deeply conservative, and their conservatism has acted to their disadvantage in an age of change. But they have a priceless heritage of poise, sanity, and tradition which may see them through the present years of turmoil.

In this chapter also we have learned something about the origins of the people of Japan and their early history. They owed a great debt of gratitude to China for their initial cultural advancements, but had already begun to make their own individual contributions. We shall come back to the subsequent evolution of the island kingdom in a future chapter. At the conclusion of this chapter, Nippon was still static and slumbering. But already her people had been inculcated with such important traits as unswerving loyalty to their emperor, almost fanatical courage, and a great pride in their native customs and ideals.



PART FOUR

*The Panorama of Europe*

CHAPTER 12

*Castle, Manor, and Town*

CHAPTER 13

*Bishop, Priest, and Monk*

CHAPTER 14

*University and Cathedral*

## THE PANORAMA OF EUROPE

**T**HE FOREGOING CHAPTERS have given a picture of the high level of civilization in the Near East and the Far East in medieval times. In the history of world civilization, it was a period when these areas outshone other parts of the world. Bagdad became a metropolis of two million people. Constantinople displayed an architectural magnificence and a superiority in the making of luxurious wares not rivaled anywhere in the west. Hindu culture enjoyed its golden age under the Rajput dynasty. And China during the glorious T'ang period developed printing, subsidized art, and perused with happy satisfaction the matchless poetry of Tu Fu and Li Po. Passing from the notable achievements in the Near and the Far East, we now consider the course of events in Europe after the collapse of Charlemagne's empire in the ninth century.

The time span for the Middle Ages in western Europe can be thought of as the thousand years separating the fifth from the fifteenth century. So much research in the medieval field has been done in our times that we scarcely need feel obliged to refute the charge that the Middle Ages were devoid of order and learning. This error arose largely out of the false emphasis placed by Renaissance scholars on the culture of ancient Greece and Rome, so that they were unable to appreciate the true significance of the many original contributions of their immediate predecessors. But modern scholars have demonstrated that the medieval mind was just as capable as any other and medieval learning and art just as remarkable. The Middle Ages, however, were motivated by a perspective quite different from what had gone before or was to come after. This perspective has been called "other-worldly." The attention of our medieval ancestors tended to be turned toward a religious goal—one of preparation for the hereafter. The Church was the great arbiter of human destiny in the Middle Ages, and it strengthened this attitude.

Although the Middle Ages were in an important sense "other-worldly," they were at the same time peopled with men who were very much concerned with secular interests and who championed the cause of this world. Our medieval forebears led a flesh-and-blood existence, and, especially in view of the ever-present hazards of plague and famine, they were remarkably "alive." The Middle Ages were a period of transition from the rich classical culture of Greece and Rome to the even richer culture of modern times, a transition which was marked, at the outset, by several centuries of uncertainty and a lowering of material, moral, and

intellectual standards. But by 800 A.D. the process of revival had definitely begun. The fusion of four great elements, Greek, Roman, Christian, and German, was well on its way, and in the next six hundred years the upward trend of civilization was vigorous. After the twelfth century the advance of culture in western Europe was stimulated by contact with the Near East and even the Far East.

**T**HE MEDIEVAL SCENE now presents itself for our examination. Life in the castle, manor, and town will acquaint us with how men were governed, how food was produced, and how some few commodities were manufactured and sold. Interwoven with the political and economic manifestations of medieval culture were the social habits of the time. We shall see how the lords and ladies lived and dined, how they amused themselves, how the serfs eked out a miserable existence and tried to get a little joy out of life, and what kind of life was led by the burgher in the city. The Middle Ages were far from barren in thought, for we shall see that during this period our modern European languages took form, the Gothic style was evolved, many literary classics were produced, and finally, the university in its modern form was born.

As for the Christian Church, its influence pervaded everywhere, for it gave the medieval scene its dimensions, its color, its main characters, and its inner meaning. All men were born, lived, and died under the protection of the Church, and the Church was stern toward those who tried to reject its ministrations. But there were few indeed who tried, for within the Church was consolation from the harshness and uncertainty of life. The Church provided warmth and color and drama in a society that was often drab and unexciting. Within the Church, too, a career might be made when social stratification outside had stifled the opportunities of all but the well-born. Finally, the authority of the Church, stemming from the Pope in Rome and filtering down through an hierarchy of archbishops, bishops, and other functionaries to the humble parish priest, provided the nearest approach to effective centralized government in the Middle Ages.

## THE FEUDAL AGE: 843–1400

### Castle, Manor, and Town

9th century	Danes invade Europe and help bring about the decentralization of power known as feudalism
843	Treaty of Verdun foreshadows political boundaries of modern Europe
10th century	Towns begin to spring up throughout Europe
900	Feudalism emerges as a well-defined governmental system
12th century	Merchant class becomes distinct social group
12th and 13th centuries	Chivalry as an institution reaches its zenith
12th and 13th centuries	Many castles built throughout Europe
13th century	Hanseatic League originated
1281	City of Florence has population of nearly 45,000
1381	Peasants' Revolt

## CHAPTER 12

# *Castle, Manor, and Town*



WHEN we last studied western Europe, its civilization was undergoing far-reaching change from the strong impact of numerous Germanic invasions that reached their climax in the fifth century. The prosperous city life, so important a feature of the Roman empire, practically disappeared in the sixth and seventh centuries, and the strong central government that had once radiated from Rome guaranteeing law and order to all Roman subjects became a mere memory. But while civilization retrogressed during the so-called Dark Ages, life still went on. New institutions were devised to take the place of those destroyed by the Germanic invasions. Politically, economically, and socially these new agencies were generally crude when compared with those which served society in the days of the Caesars, but even so, they served their purpose of providing the men of medieval times with food and shelter and the means of obtaining at least some form of law and order.

Beside the church, the most characteristic features of medieval European society were feudalism and the manor. While feudalism referred primarily to political organization, the manor constituted the system by which medieval man obtained economic subsistence. Feudalism did not spring up overnight in Europe following the Germanic invasions. In fact, its roots, as we shall see, go back to practices prevailing in the Roman empire and even to certain institutions possessed by the Germanic tribes before they came into the empire. Like so many things in medieval civilization, feudalism was a blend of both Germanic and Roman customs. The essence of feudalism was lack of an effective central government and reliance upon local authorities to carry on governmental functions.

Equally important and perhaps even more basic than feudalism was the manor, for the manorial system was the method by which food and clothing were provided. The manor,



as we shall soon discover, was a small area of land peopled mainly by serfs, who constituted the overwhelming majority of the population of Europe in the Middle Ages. Not slave and yet not free, these peasants were bound to the soil which they tilled for their betters, the feudal nobility. Agriculture on the manor was primitive, contact with the outside world was rare, and self-sufficiency was the economic keynote.

For several hundred years, in fact throughout the early centuries of the Middle Ages, feudalism and the manor dominated the medieval scene. But slowly and imperceptibly a new institution gathered its strength and expanded its activities. This was the city. By 1200 flourishing cities existed in many areas of Europe. The revival of city life first began in northern Italy, and about the same time city life began anew in southern France, in Flanders, in a few localities in England, and in the Rhine valley and along the Baltic Sea in Germany. While nourished by medieval civilization, the city soon showed that its spirit was entirely foreign to the organization of medieval life. The cities weaned serfs away from their manors, ended the self-sufficiency of the manors by contributing to the expansion of trade, and combined with the kings to destroy the influence of the feudal aristocracy.

### *Feudalism*

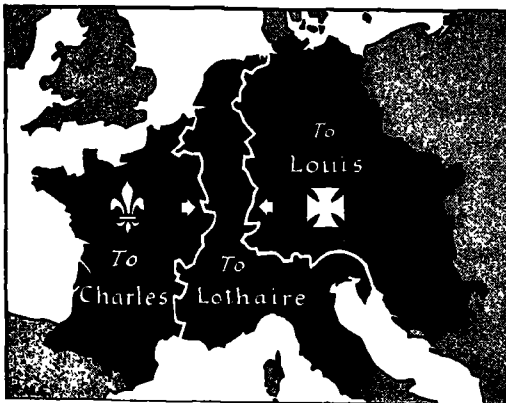
**The collapse of Charlemagne's empire.** In our last reference to historical developments in western Europe (Chapter 7) we saw how the Frankish ruler Charlemagne had succeeded in creating a well organized and efficiently governed Christian empire which included most of western Europe except Spain and the region east of the Elbe River. But this empire was not destined to last. The collapse of the Carolingian empire is the first important event in the story of medieval times.

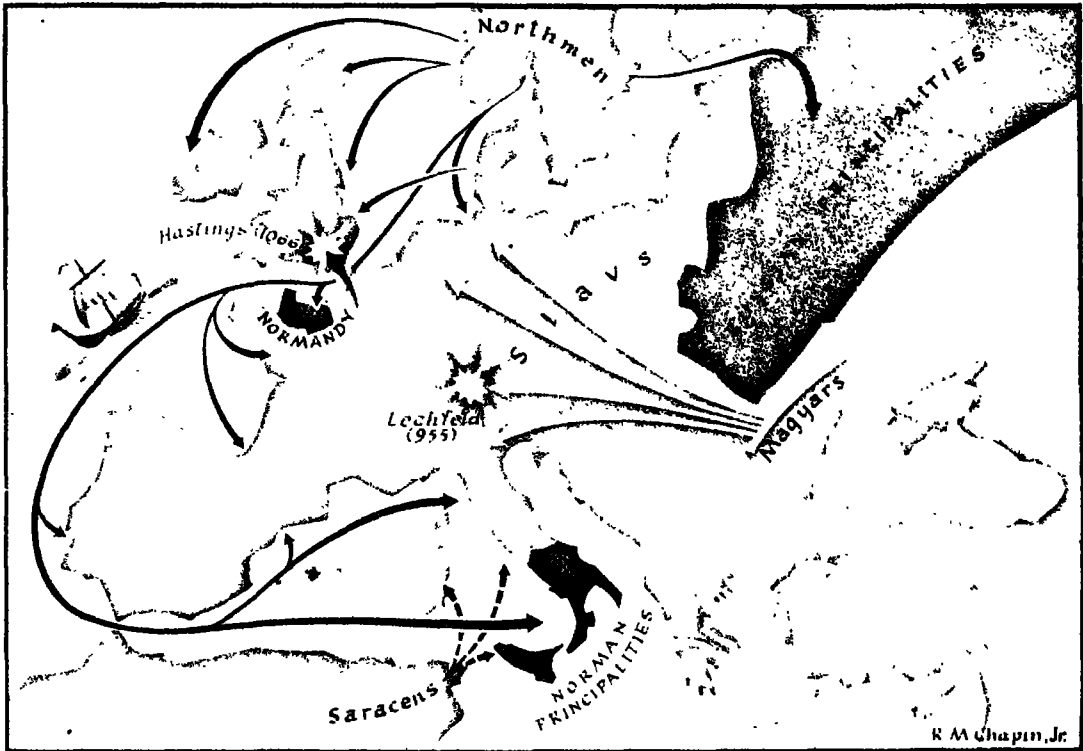
The descendants of Charlemagne had little of his genius. For example, his son, Louis the Pious, who succeeded his father in 814, was dominated by his wife and by churchmen and

had little will of his own in governmental affairs. Even before the death of Louis the Pious, his sons were quarreling over the imperial patrimony. Charles the Bald and Louis the German made common cause against their elder brother, Lothaire, who had been given the imperial title by his father. After some fighting the quarrelsome grandsons of Charlemagne settled their differences in the Treaty of Verdun in 843 (see map). This agreement divided Charlemagne's empire into three parts, foreshadowing the political boundaries of modern Europe. Charles the Bald got the equivalent of modern France, Louis the German obtained what corresponds roughly to modern Germany, and Lothaire retained the now empty title of emperor and a middle strip of territory from Italy to the North Sea.

Lothaire died in 855, and by 870 his kingdom had been divided between his younger brothers. Under their successors, the Carolingian domains fell into complete chaos. Charlemagne's unified empire had perished.

**Ninth-century invasions.** A second important development in European medieval history was the renewal of invasions in the ninth century. We recall the invasions that had caused such turmoil in the Roman world in the fifth century. The second wave of invasions, however, was not made up of the same Germanic peoples who had brought about the





fall of Rome but consisted of three other groups: Northmen (also referred to as Danes, Vikings, and Norsemen) from the north, Saracens from the south, and Hungarians from the east. The map above shows the incursions of these new peoples.

During the ninth century the Danes conquered lands in northeast England and settled there permanently, their territory being known as the Danelaw. In 843 the Norse pushed their long, slender boats up the Loire; in 845 they penetrated the Seine and conquered and settled upon lands in western France. Finally in 911 they forced Charles the Simple to cede the territory now called (after them) Normandy. Not content with their successful raids upon France, the Vikings established principalities in Russia. They pillaged even Mohammedan Spain and the Italian peninsula. But they were not simply piratical raiders. Their activities were a major factor in the revival of trade in northwestern Europe, and they carried on a prosperous commerce with the Byzantine empire during the ninth and tenth centuries. The political effects of their coming, however, were not so constructive as their commerce. They played havoc

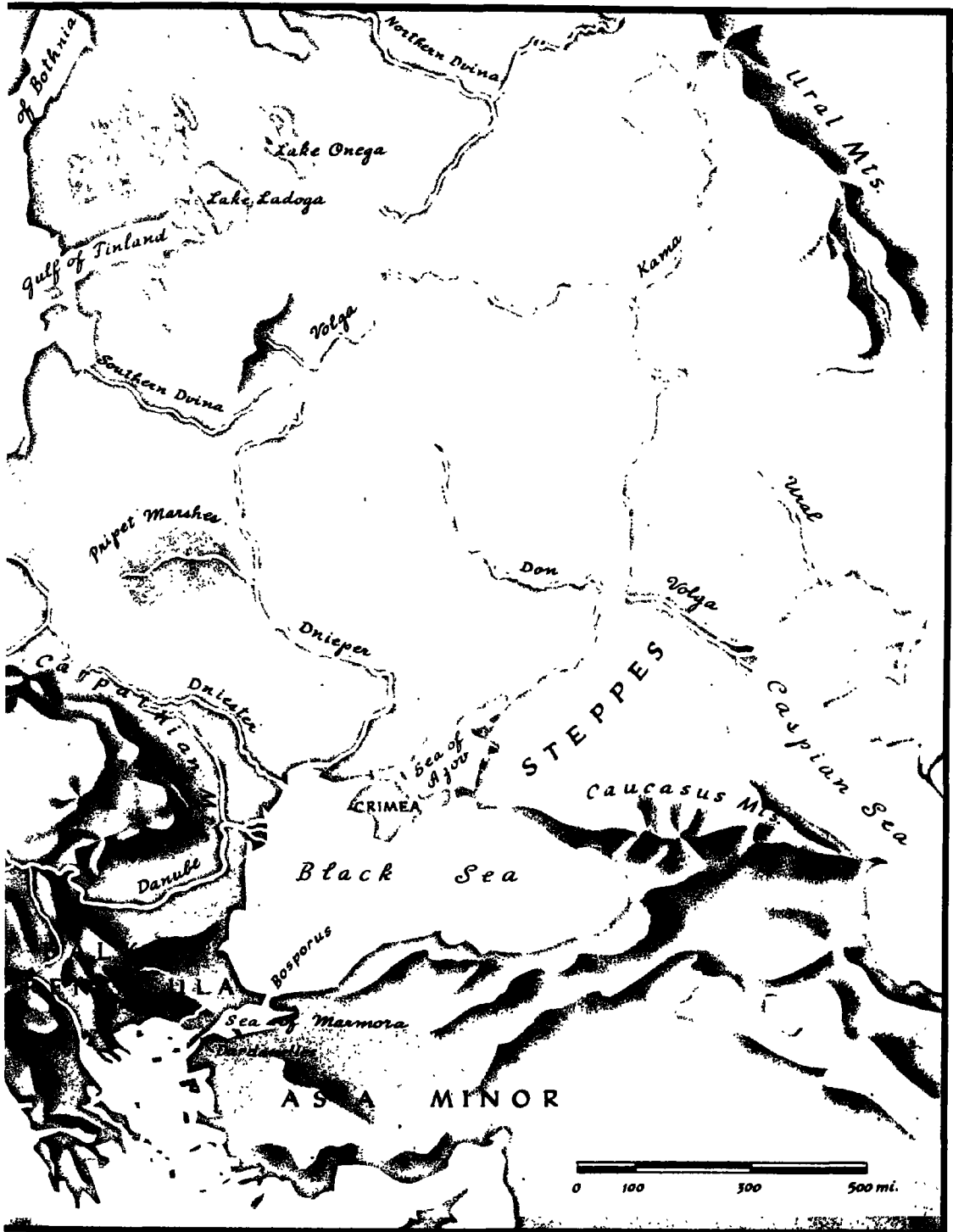
with the attempts of the Carolingian monarchs to keep their dominions under central authority, and thus they aided materially in bringing about that decentralization of power known as feudalism.

From the east came the Hungarians, who were Asiatic in origin. After their defeat by Otto I in the battle of Lechfeld (955), the Hungarians settled in that region of eastern Europe which bears their name today. In the ninth century Mohammedan Saracens repeatedly attacked Italy, profaning the tomb of St. Peter in 846 and gaining a foothold in Sicily and southern Italy.

**Frankish disunity.** The destructive raids of the new invaders brought confusion to western Europe. Added to the danger from the outside was the growing inability of the Frankish kings to maintain order within their own borders, while the German custom of dividing the kingdom among the monarch's sons certainly did not make for political unification. As the Frankish empire split into warring principalities and kingdoms, the local landed gentry grew in power at the expense of the king. The kings were forced to grant lands to powerful nobles to make sure the nobles



*In the history of Europe, natural boundaries such as mountains, rivers, and seas have played an important role. By studying this map closely you can sometimes tell what boundaries were to mark off states and nations as these grew*



up in later times. As you study the history of the succeeding centuries, compare other maps with this one to notice how some of the greatest trouble spots have been those where no natural boundaries marked off one state from another.

would not desert to the king's enemies. The nobles in turn were expected to provide the monarch with mounted knights.

Finally, it became obvious to all that the central government was unable to protect its subjects against the attacks of foreign invaders. Everywhere less powerful men had to place themselves under the protection of more powerful men in the immediate neighborhood. The process was well on its way by the middle of the ninth century, following the virtual collapse of the Carolingian empire. This is borne out by a Carolingian law in 847 which ordered every freeman to place himself under a lord, plain recognition on the part of the central government that it was not able to afford protection to the people of the realm. Two main factors, the disintegration of central power and the growing need of protection, served to create in western Europe a new concept of government—feudalism.

**Feudalism defined.** Feudalism can be said to have emerged as a well-defined governmental system throughout most of western Europe by the year 900. It was a system of government whose outstanding feature was the distribution, or decentralization, of political authority among a landed aristocracy. In theory this aristocracy was subordinate to the king, but in practice it was a law unto itself. Feudalism was characterized by the following features: (1) the exercise of governmental functions by numerous local authorities, (2) a distinctive form of landholding, (3) an elaborate system of personal relationships, (4) a military system, and (5) certain judicial agencies.

Feudalism was really a transitional political stage, for it was seldom anywhere more than a poor substitute for a closely knit and centralized government. It served as a stopgap following the collapse of a unified political system until a more effective government could be developed. The value of feudalism was that it enabled people, in the absence of a strong government, to obtain certain basic political requisites such as military protection and some form of justice, without which even a limited form of civilized life would be impossible. Such a situation obtained in China at the time of Confucius and in Egypt following the demise of the Old Kingdom. Feudalism was nothing new.

**The origins of feudalism.** European feudalism was based upon customs and institutions

that came from two main sources, Roman and German. By the fifth century the ability of the emperor to protect his subjects had disappeared and the provinces were at the mercy of marauders. Since individuals needed protection both for themselves and their lands, two practices arose in the later Roman empire. The weak landowner, fearing the loss of everything, gave over his land to a stronger neighbor, who permitted him to cultivate it. However, he no longer owned the land but was now a tenant, and the new owner, although he granted the property to the original owner without rent and usually for no specific time, had the right to take it back at will. This Roman practice was known as the *precarium*, and continued to exist into the Merovingian period. But as the grant of land could be terminated at any time, the tenant often found that his tenure was most "precarious." When the land was granted to the original owner on the condition that he render military service, the practice was called *beneficium*, and when the *beneficium* became hereditary and involved feudal dues other than military service, it was called the fief. There was a second Roman practice for the freeman who owned no land. He went to the strong neighbor and asked for protection and support. This he received, through the practice called the *patrocinium*. In return for various services he was added to the lord's household.

The institution of *comitatus* came from German society, where for a long time the chieftains had chosen picked warriors as a personal retinue. The *comitatus* was a relationship of mutual protection wherein these warriors swore solemnly to aid their chief loyally at all times. In return they were provided by him with food and military equipment. The personal relationship of feudalism arose from the union of the practices of the *patrocinium* and *comitatus*, while the feudal system of land tenure grew out of the *precarium*.

A third practice played a part in the development of feudalism. This was the granting of immunity. Through force or favor the landed aristocrat, or noble, as he came to be called, exacted from the king the exemption of his estate from taxes or royal supervision. Thus the lord won the all-important right to govern his own territory as he wished. The lord now had definite political and legal powers and responsibilities, so long as he governed according

to his obligations to the king. His immunity was legally recognized in the course of time. By 900 this process of decentralization was completed in France, and it was soon common elsewhere in Europe, though not to such a complete extent.

**Relation of lord and vassal.** One of the principal elements of feudalism was the personal one, the lord-vassal relationship. The vassal knelt before his lord and promised to be his "man." This ceremony was the act of homage, and it was filled with all the solemnity which the Middle Ages could create. With the lord sitting and the man kneeling before him with head uncovered, the vassal placed both hands in those of the lord and said, "I become your man, to keep faith with you against all others." The lord then helped him to his feet, kissed him on the mouth, and promised to take him as his vassal. The latter then swore upon the Gospel or some other sacred object an oath of eternal fidelity to his lord, called the oath of fealty.

The next rite was that of investing the vassal with the fief by a symbolic act on the part of the lord. A lance, glove, stick, or even a bit of straw was handed the vassal to signify the latter's right of private jurisdiction over a fief (but not ownership of it). The fief was ordinarily a unit of land, varying in size but always large enough at least to support a knight and his horse. The granting of the fief was called *infeudation*, or *enfeoffment*, while the ceremony by which the vassal was symbolically invested with the fief was known as *investiture*. The fief was like the *beneficium* except that the former was not a life estate but was hereditary, transferred from father to son, with each fulfilling the usual services of vassalage.

The feudal contract thus entered into by lord and vassal was considered sacred and binding upon both parties. Breaking this tie of mutual obligations was considered to be a felony because it violated the feudal code of chivalry by which all knights good and true patterned their lives.

**The lord's obligations.** Let us now examine the reciprocal feudal contract and see what the obligations of both the lord and his vassal were. The lord was obliged (1) to protect his vassal from his enemies, (2) to ensure him justice at the feudal court, (3) to refrain from corrupting nobles who held land from his vassal (a relationship known as *subinfeudation*,

which will be described on the next page), (4) to build no castles on the fief without the vassal's consent, and (5) to refrain from injuring his vassal's honor by abusing his children or wife. The nonfulfillment of any of these obligations broke the feudal contract and freed the vassal of his fealty and obligations.

**The vassal's obligations.** The vassal's obligations were more numerous and complex. (1) The primary duty was that of military service. He and his knights and followers were expected to devote forty days' service each year to his lord at no expense to the lord. Beyond that time he did not have to stay and was free to return home or else demand payment for his services. At other times it was usual for the lord to ask for a money payment from his vassals in place of armed knights. The payment was called *scutage* (shield money) and enabled the lord to hire mercenary soldiers. Another military duty was known as *castleward service*, which consisted of performing garrison duty at the lord's castle or coming to its defense when it was attacked.

(2) The vassal was obliged to assist the lord in his court and often had to devote much time to the judging of disputes between vassal and vassal, for feudal law asserted the right of a noble to be judged only by his peers, or social equals. The vassal was also expected to bring all his own disputes before the lord's court.

(3) The lord had the right to demand at certain times definite money payments which drained his vassal's resources heavily. The payments were customarily called *aids* and could be levied on three occasions: whenever the lord's eldest son was made a knight, whenever the eldest daughter was to be married and a dowry had to be provided for her, and whenever the lord was captured and had to be ransomed.

(4) Another money payment, called the *relief*, was exacted whenever either the lord or the vassal died and his heir succeeded. This "inheritance tax" came as a result of performing homage (which had to be undertaken each time there was a new lord or vassal), and it was a sum often equivalent to the fief's revenues for the first year, a big expense for the vassal.

(5) Another financial obligation dreaded by the vassal was the right of hospitality. By this right the lord and his retinue had to be provided with shelter, food, and entertainment

when passing through the territory of his subject. Because a large retinue and a long stay might bankrupt the vassal, the extent of such hospitality came in time to be precisely limited.

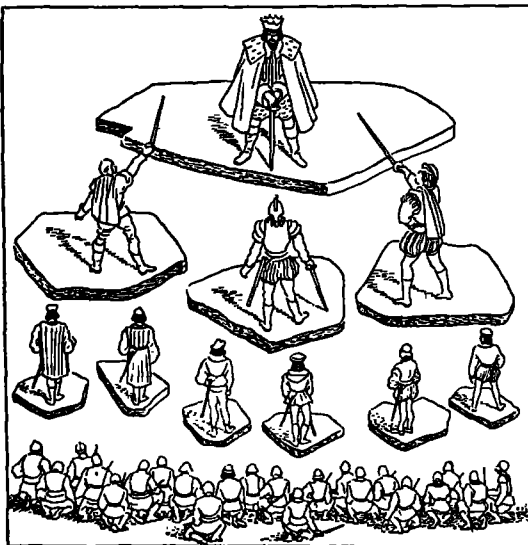
**Feudal incidents.** In addition to the vassal's obligations, the lord had certain privileges regarding the administration of the fief, called feudal incidents. (1) Whenever a vassal died without leaving any legitimate heirs, the fief reverted, or escheated, to the lord. The latter was then free to bestow it upon whomever he wished. (2) If the vassal failed to live up to his feudal obligations, the lord might confiscate his estate. Such a practice was called forfeiture. (3) When a vassal died leaving only a minor heir, the lord enjoyed the right of wardship, that is, the administration of the estate until the boy came of age, meanwhile keeping its yearly revenues for himself as payment for his trouble. (4) If the vassal left no son and a daughter was to inherit the fief, the lord claimed the right to provide her with a suitable husband. He did this because it was essential that the fief be administered by a man who could fight well and be loyal to his suzerain. It was a right which often brought misery to the women, for even girls of ten or less might be compelled to marry men many times older, whom they had never seen before, and whose only virtue lay in their ability to crack skulls with a heavy mace. (5) If the vassal went away on a pilgrimage or crusade,

the lord possessed the right to administer the fief during his absence.

**Subinfeudation.** A great lord often found that the fief which he held from the king was too large for him to administer personally. So, while he kept a certain portion (called the *demesne*) for his personal use, he subdivided, or subinfeudated, the remainder of his fief to men who thereby became his vassals. Each of these vassals could in turn, if he so desired, subinfeudate his particular fief. Thus if A received a fief from the king, he might subinfeudate part of it to B, who in turn might subinfeudate part of his fief to C.

Meanwhile, in order to add to his small portion of land, B might also have pledged fealty to D, a noble as powerful as A. Now, if A and D should fight one another, to which lord does vassal B owe allegiance? A king might even be the vassal of another king, as in the case of Philip of France and John of England. John was the vassal of Philip for certain French lands, yet John in no manner thought that he was the social inferior of the French monarch. Thus men could be at the same time lords and vassals. It even happened that a lord, desiring a particular bit of land held by one of his own subjects, was actually the vassal of his own vassal. Therefore, while subinfeudation aided feudal management of large fiefs by dividing them into smaller units, the conflict of loyalties was a great defect. In France especially the process of subinfeudation was carried to such a complicated and minute extent that the entire feudal system lacked cohesion.

**The feudal hierarchy.** In theory feudalism was a vast hierarchy. At the top stood the emperor or king, and all the land in his dominions belonged to him. He kept large areas for his personal use (royal or crown lands) and invested the highest nobles—dukes, counts, and earls—with the remainder. Those nobles holding lands directly from the king were called tenants-in-chief. They in turn parceled out portions of their fiefs to lesser nobles—viscounts and barons. All vassals other than tenants-in-chief were known as *mesne* tenants. The lowest in the hierarchical scale was the humble knight. His bit of subinfeudated land, sufficient only to support him and maintain his military needs, was called the knight's fee. "The landless knight was known only in Germany and originally he was . . . but a serf



doing military service."<sup>1</sup> Thus we see how important land was in the social and economic life of feudalism. However, it is important to keep in mind that the great mass of people fell below the feudal hierarchy, which was made up of the nobility and higher members of the clergy. The common people will be discussed later in connection with the manorial system and the rise of towns.

**The Church and feudalism.** One of the complicating factors in feudalism was the inclusion of the Church in the system. It so happened that many devout nobles, for the sake of the souls of their ancestors and themselves, would bequeath lands to the Church. The land was often held by feudal tenure, and the local abbot or other church official who obtained the fief would become the vassal of the heir of the deceased noble. The abbot had to perform military service through his representative in secular affairs, the *advocatus*. The fundamental difficulty, as the Church obtained more and more lands held by feudal tenure, was that its officials as churchmen owed their loyalty to the Pope and to the Church, but as vassals holding feudal land they also owed certain secular or governmental obligations to their respective lords. There was a serious clash of loyalties here, which caused a bitter struggle between the head of the feudal system, the king, and the head of the Church, the Pope. Even worse, preoccupation with his worldly duties as a feudal vassal often caused a churchman to neglect his spiritual duties.

**Feudal warfare.** In practice the feudal hierarchy often worked in sharp contrast to its ideal. Force in the Middle Ages was the final authority. Some of the French nobles had lands greater in extent than those possessed by the kings, and they frequently made war upon their suzerains. The general atmosphere of the feudal system was one of violence. The vassal performed only those services which he could not possibly escape. Warfare for its own sake was often resorted to by the nobility. Although much of the fighting was done for the king in some campaign or other, private warfare was a common occurrence.

There were good reasons for this distressing state of affairs. First of all, land was the only real source of wealth, and the supply of land was limited. Holdings could be increased in only two ways, marriage and war. If the former course proved inconvenient because the noble

was already married, the second method was always open. Again, warfare enabled a noble to reward his followers with fiefs, and, if they produced nothing else, forays and raids kept a man in good mettle. To die on the field of battle was the only honorable end for a spirited gentleman; to die in one's bed was a "cow's death."

It is true that the Church both lessened and "Christianized" this evil of warfare, by two institutions. About the year 990 it threatened to curse and ban from the Church all persons who pillaged sacred places or refused to spare noncombatants. This restraint was called the Peace of God. But a far more effective check on knightly pugnacity appeared in the south of France about 1025—the Truce of God. This second restraint represented an attempt to provide certain "closed seasons" by limiting the times when the nobles could fight. Originally the period covered by the truce included only Friday, Saturday, and Sunday of each week. Later the period was lengthened from sunset on Wednesday to sunrise on Monday, and certain seasons, such as the one extending from the beginning of Lent through Whitsuntide, were also observed.

We should be careful not to take an exaggerated view of the extent of medieval private war. The medieval chronicler was like the modern newspaper reporter who does not mention the thousands of sober, law-abiding citizens but records the battles, murders, and sudden deaths. Brigandage was a greater menace than private warfare, while "the worst evil of the Middle Ages was its cruelty to enemies, captives, criminals, and heretics."<sup>2</sup> However, the hard life of the times, the high mortality from famine, plague, and warfare, and the social prejudices arising from class distinction combined to make our medieval ancestors less sensitive and tougher fibered than we are.

**The function of feudalism.** What shall be our general estimate of feudalism? Hegel has stated that it was "a protest of barbarism against barbarism,"<sup>3</sup> and Henri Martin has maintained that "it concealed in its bosom the weapons with which it would be itself one day smitten."<sup>4</sup> That is, feudalism, by maintaining a king at the head of the feudal hierarchy, was really keeping intact the agency of strong monarchy which would gradually reassert itself and thus restore centralized government in Europe at the expense of the feudal nobles.



Feudalism was crude and makeshift, but it was perhaps the system best fitted to bring order out of the chaos into which Europe had fallen. It put an end to the political fluctuations of the centuries of barbarian invasions by stabilizing society and creating a system of law and order. It even contributed to democracy, for its principle that feudal law was above the

king (as witnessed in *Magna Charta*) was later used by the middle class to curb royal absolutism. Despite its cruelty and high-handed methods, feudal society had instilled into it the ideals of personal honor and reciprocal obligations between individuals; and however much these ideals were honored in the breach, they passed into the mores of our own society.

### *The Age of Chivalry*

**Chivalry in feudal society.** The members of the feudal hierarchy were aristocrats belonging to either the nobility or the clergy. Medieval society is conventionally thought of as consisting of three quite distinct classes: the clergy, the nobility, and the common toilers. Or as the old jingle had it:

God hath shapen lives three,  
Boor and knight and priest they be.

To tell the truth, it was often difficult to show where one order left off and the other began. For example, serfs in France are known to have become knights. However, it should be remembered that in France by the twelfth century knighthood was a closed class. Again, the clergy were recruited from all classes, and a peasant lad might rise to become Pope, the head of all Christendom. Furthermore, the "three orders" theory of feudal society fails to include a large group whose importance grew with the passing of time—the townsmen. But the feudal social life which we are about to describe affected only the aristocracy. The code of conduct that developed in this society was called chivalry.

**Chivalry defined.** The word chivalry comes from *chevalier*, meaning horseman, and it refers to a code of etiquette connected with knighthood. It did not appear until quite late in the Middle Ages. It developed from three sources: The German tribal custom of investing adolescent youth with military arms, the Christian religious and moral ideas, and the Saracenic concepts of poesy and heraldry. Chivalry as an institution reached its zenith in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.

The chivalric code of conduct was strict. It demanded fidelity to one's lord and to one's vows, championship of the Church against her enemies, protection of women, children, and the infirm, generosity, courtesy, reverence toward womanhood, and service to God by

warring against the infidel and the heretic. Unfortunately, chivalry was quite different in practice. While he might cloak his motives under high-sounding words, the average knight continued to plunder, fight, and abuse women, especially if they were not of the noble class. With the decline of chivalry, its code became fantastic and even ridiculous. Knights-errant roamed the countryside fighting innocent strangers for the honor of ladies who may have known them but slightly. It was to ridicule this nonsensical aspect of chivalry that Cervantes wrote his immortal satire, *Don Quixote*. But the ideals of chivalry definitely affected the conduct of later society. They seeped down into middle-class life and today color our own conception of a true "gentleman."

**Training for knighthood.** Chivalry imposed a rigid training for knighthood. Until the age of seven, a boy was kept in the care of his mother. When he became seven, he was sent by his father to the household of a relative, a friend, or the father's suzerain. There he became a page, attending the ladies and running their errands, learning the rudiments of religion, manners, hawking and hunting, and being instilled with the valuable lesson of obedience. When about fifteen or sixteen, he became a squire. Now the lad prepared himself seriously for the art of war. He learned to keep a knight's equipment in good order, to ride a war horse with dexterity, and to handle the sword, the shield, and the lance correctly. To that end he practiced long hours in the tilting field against other squires or rode at full gallop against the quintain, an object which administered the passing squire a crushing blow unless it was struck fairly with the lance. The youth also waited on his lord and lady at table and learned music and poetry and the popular medieval games of chess and backgammon.



*It is from such prints as this one, in which the artist has crowded the whole life of a manorial village, that we get many of our ideas of medieval times. A hunting party is shown in the foreground, the ladies (one of them with a falcon on her wrist) riding behind the knights. The hilltop castle has the typical drawbridge and moat. The houses of the village are surrounded by a "close" with the church in a central place. Note also the mill, the mill race, and what appears to be a wine or cider press. In the upper right corner of the picture can be seen evidence of strip-farming, the serf using the heavy plow common in the north (for economy's sake the artist has shown only two draft animals). The nets were apparently set to catch hares. Below them stands a wayside shrine. Visible on the horizon is an occupied gibbet with buzzards wheeling over it.*

**The knighting ceremony.** If not actually knighted on the battlefield for valor, the squire was usually considered eligible for knighthood when twenty-one. By the twelfth century the Church claimed to have a role in the ceremony. It maintained that the knight was highly privileged because he performed service for God in the secular world. Therefore knighthood was invested with impressive symbolism. The candidate bathed to symbolize purity, an act called the bath of purification, and watched his weapons before the altar in an all-night vigil, confessing and making resolutions to be a worthy knight. This was followed by a solemn Mass, during which his sword was blessed on the altar by the priest or bishop. Then came the ceremony in which he was dubbed knight. Kneeling before his

lord, the candidate received a blow on the back of the neck (the accolade), with these words: "In the name of God, Saint Michael, and Saint George I dub thee knight. Be valiant." The new knight was then armed ceremoniously, particular significance being attached to the binding on of his golden spurs, for the horse was the indispensable companion of the knight and represented in itself the symbol of nobility. The knight then sprang to his horse and tilted against the quintain to prove his dexterity at arms. Thus the code of chivalry and the Church combined to impress upon the knight that he must be brave, gentle, and loyal to his God and suzerain.

**Heraldry.** One of the most fascinating aspects of chivalry was the development of heraldry. Heraldry has to do with the deco-

rative designs worn by all noble families on their armor and helmets. Heraldry goes back to early Mesopotamia and to China, where in the oldest times the five-clawed dragon had become the heraldic device of the empire. In Japan the emperor had his symbol of chrysanthemums, and the Aztec eagle symbol is famous. As the feudal system developed, noble families took great pride in possessing an ancient heraldic device, the symbol for family dignity and honor.

The popularity of heraldry swept through Europe during the Middle Ages, especially when the closed helmet came into vogue, hiding the face of its wearer. At first the distinguishing devices used were simple emblems, but in time the most complex and strange forms and colors were designed. Two hundred eighty-five variations of the simple design of the cross were devised by ingenious feudal artists,<sup>5</sup> while such animals (real and fictitious) as the lion, leopard, griffin, dragon, unicorn, and a host of others could be found in fanciful postures on the shields of noble families. A man's social position was proved by his coat of arms, for by its quarterings, or divisions, could be seen the noble families to which its owner was related.

**The castle.** The life of the nobles centered about the castle. The earliest of these structures appeared in the ninth century and were mere blockhouses built solely of timber. Stone castles did not appear until the late eleventh century, and even then only the tower (called donjon, or keep) was built of stone. Not until the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, when chivalry was in full bloom, did massive structures of stone appear.

The important part of the castle was the donjon, surrounded by a yard called the bailey. This in turn was encircled by cleverly constructed flanking walls protected by turrets from which arrows, boiling oil, and other refinements of feudal military science might be showered upon the attackers. Surrounding the wall fortifications was the moat, a steep-sided ditch filled with water over which the enemy must cross. The only entrance to the castle lay across the drawbridge, which led to the gate. (Note the castle shown in the print on page 313.) The latter was protected by a heavy iron grating called the portcullis, which could be let down swiftly while the drawbridge was raised, thus interposing an addi-

tional barrier. Inside the bailey were storerooms, workshops, and a chapel. The lord at first dwelled in the donjon, but by the thirteenth century he was living in a more spacious apartment in the inner castle.

**Medieval castle furniture.** Life in the castle was anything but comfortable or romantic. Because it had been built for purposes of defense, the castle possessed no spacious windows but only slits in the thick walls from which archers might shoot down on the attacker. The rooms were therefore dark and gloomy. The stone walls were damp and bare except for occasional pieces of tapestry to break the monotony (and keep the dampness out), and the stairs were steep. The furnishings were meager in the extreme. In the great hall were dining tables set upon trestles; when not in use the boards were laid against the wall and the trestles cleared away. The principal table was set on a raised section called the dais, and here the important personages sat. The seats were generally backless and uncomfortable. In the room was a huge fireplace which afforded the drafty room its only warmth. The floor was covered with rushes which were seldom replaced and which became dirty and evil-smelling, since they contained the bones and scraps of bread and meat which the diners threw over their shoulders to the dogs who roamed about behind the seats while the meal was in progress. The use of carpets was an expensive oriental luxury which slowly won favor only after the crusades.

Besides the hall there were bedrooms, also sparsely furnished, each containing a few chests and bureaus and an enormous bed. The bed was built upon a platform and stood under a large canopy from which hung heavy curtains. The curtains kept away drafts and preserved modesty, for nobody in feudal days wore any night clothes. The bedroom was also unusual in that falcons, hounds, and even barnyard creatures often took up their abode there.

**Life in the castle.** Life began early in the day, breakfast being served about six o'clock. The riser washed his face and hands—and in passing we might note that medieval civilization was not "a thousand years without a bath," for each castle had its well, and running water was often brought through lead pipes; the larger castles and abbeys also had latrines. Dinner was served at ten in the morning and the last meal at five. Our medieval ancestors



*A banquet in a medieval castle is shown in this miniature painting, an illustration for a fourteenth-century work. Note the squires serving the meal, the dog pursuing scraps, the absence of silverware.*

were certainly hearty eaters, although the fare was limited. Meat, fish, and fowl were served in great variety and greater quantity, while such vegetables as onions, cabbages, beets, beans, peas, and the popular turnip were in common use, as were such fruits as pears, apples, cherries, plums, and strawberries. One elaborate medieval recipe for "leche lumbard"—a sort of German sausage—ran like this:

"Take pork and pound it in a mortar with eggs; add sugar, salt, raisins, currants, minced dates, powdered pepper, and cloves; put it in a bladder and boil it; then cut it in slices."<sup>6</sup> The sausage was served with a sauce made of raisins, red wine, almond-milk colored with saffron, pepper, cloves, cinnamon, and ginger.

Potatoes were absent from the medieval fare, as were coffee and tea. But there was no lack of beverages. Beer and cider were commonplace drinks, while the noble prided himself upon his knowledge of wines. To the connoisseur a wine should be "clear like the tears of a penitent, so that a man may see distinctly to the bottom of the glass; its color should represent the greenness of a buffalo's horn; when drunk it should descend impetuously like

thunder; sweet-tasted as an almond; creeping like a squirrel; leaping like a roebuck; strong like the building of a Cistercian monastery; glittering like a spark of fire; subtle like the logic of the schools of Paris; delicate as fine silk; and colder than crystal."<sup>7</sup>

**Table etiquette.** Table manners were both interesting and startling. The gentleman cut up the meat with his dagger. Certain dishes were served on plates, but portions of meat were placed on thick slabs of bread, into which the gravy soaked. After the meat was eaten, the bread was thrown to the dogs or deposited in the alms-basket for the poor. Forks were unknown. Food was carried to the mouth by the thumb and two fingers. Men were allowed to wear their hats at table, but etiquette insisted that they should not fill their mouths too full, laugh or talk with the mouth full, wipe their knives on the tablecloth, roll their eyes, or pick their teeth publicly. Also

Scratche not thy head with thy fyngers  
When thou arte at thy meate;  
Nor spytte you over the table board;  
See thou doest not this forget.

Pick not thy teeth with thy knyfe  
 Nor with thy fyngers ende,  
 But take a stick or some cleane thing,  
 Then doe you not offende.<sup>8</sup>

In fact, Chaucer informs us that his coy Prioress was a model of deportment because

At table she had been well taught withal,  
 And never from her lips let morsels fall,  
 Nor dipped her fingers deep in sauce, but ate  
 With so much care the food upon her plate  
 That never driblet fell upon her breast.  
 In courtesy she had delight and zest,  
 Her upper lip was always wiped so clean  
 That in her cup was no iota seen  
 Of grease, when she had drunk her draught of wine.

Becomingly she reached for meat to dine.<sup>9</sup>

**Amusements.** The amusements of the nobility were scarcely intellectual. Only those persons who had decided upon a church career had received an education sufficiently sound to enable them to enjoy reading and conversing on such subjects as philosophy or other serious subjects. The average noble derived his pleasures differently. He spent as much time as possible out-of-doors. He considered warfare almost the finest of sports, for he had been trained from birth in military matters. During the monotonous days of peace, however, he found several excellent substitutes. One was mock battle, the joust and tournament. The joust was a conflict between two armed knights, each equipped, usually, with a blunted lance with which he attempted to unseat the other. The tournament was a general mêlée in which groups of knights attacked each other. Often fierce fighting ensued, with frequent casualties.

The nobles were very fond of hunting, and fresh meat was much in demand. This requirement afforded a legitimate excuse for galloping over the countryside. At times some poor peasant's crops might be ruined during the chase, but most hunting was done in the nearby forests. Some great nobles had scores of horses and hounds trained in hunting the stag and wild boar.

Another popular outdoor pastime, which lords, ladies, and even high church dignitaries delighted in, was falconry. Birds were reared with the utmost care, and many an afternoon was spent by large companies of lords and ladies eagerly wagering with one another as

to whose falcon would bring down the first victim. In fact the nobles often attended Mass with hooded falcons on their wrists.

Indoor amusements included the universally popular diversions of backgammon, dice, and chess. The long and monotonous nights were sometimes enlivened by the quips of jesters or the recital of passages from the great *Chanson de Roland* by a wandering *jongleur*, or minstrel, glad to entertain his noble hosts in exchange for a bed and place at the table.

**The life of the women.** There were really two attitudes toward women during medieval times, one put forward by the Church and the other by the code of chivalry. These attitudes were never reconciled. The Church moralists preached that Eve had caused Adam to lose Eden and therefore that women were not only inferior to men but were the surest means by which men lost their souls. But chivalry and the troubadours placed women on a pedestal and maintained that they were worthy of all reverence and loyalty. Was not the blessed Mary Queen of Heaven, and did she not rival even the Holy Trinity in popularity because of her tenderness and compassion? And if Mary was so worthy of devotion, were not all gentlewomen worthy of reverence? Thus argued the troubadours, with the interesting result that in the Middle Ages women were placed either very close to paradise or very, very close to the pit.

In actual practice, however, woman's life was near neither one nor the other. She was legally inferior to man. She had little real choice as to whom she might marry. A rich widow stood the chance of being kidnaped by impulsive suitors. Such a predicament befell Eleanor of Aquitaine, who was pursued by no fewer than five men after she had been divorced from King Louis VII of France. However, very often the lady of the castle was the most influential person there, aiding her husband in its administration and even defending it from attack when her lord was absent. With more men than women leading celibate lives in the Church, not all medieval women could be furnished with husbands, and since it was a man's world, it was difficult for women to find a proper place except as wives. The medieval moralists kept rebuking women constantly for their extravagant dress and fashions. The use of stays to gain slimness, the plucking of eyebrows, the painting of cheeks, and the ex-

pensive clothes shocked the male preachers. Listen to Berthold of Regensburg:

"In order that ye may compass men's praise ye spend all your labour on your garments—on your veils and your kirtles. Many of you pay as much to the sempstress as the cost of the cloth itself; it must have shields on the shoulders, it must be flounced and tucked all round the hem; it is not enough for you to show your pride in your very buttonholes, but you must also send your feet to hell by special

torments, ye trot this way and that with your fine stitchings. Ye busy yourselves with your veils, ye twitch them hither, ye twitch them thither; ye gild them here and there with gold thread; ye will spend a good six months' work on a single veil. . . . When thou shouldest be busy in the house with something needful for the goodman, or for thyself, or thy children, or thy guests, then art thou busy instead with thy hair; thou art careful whether thy sleeves sit well, or thy veil or thy headdress, where-with thy whole time is filled."<sup>10</sup>

### *The Manorial System*

**The manor and feudalism.** We have seen that feudalism was concerned with the life of the landholding class, the nobility. But some ninety per cent of the medieval population was non-noble, living on lands which it did not own. N. S. B. Gras maintains that "The most characteristic institution in the economic history of the Middle Ages, following the fall of Rome, was the manor."<sup>11</sup> Here dwelled the rank and file of the medieval population. The manor was almost a self-sufficient world. It was at once "a structure of society, an economic régime."

We have seen that the land a vassal held from his lord was called a fief. The fief consisted of one or more estates called manors, varying in number from a knight's fief (fee) of one manor to that of a large landholder which might contain hundreds of manors. The fief was a political unit of land; the manor was an economic unit. The manor was the basic unit of production on the fief, and the term "manorial system" refers to the type of economic and social system which was centered around the manor. In studying the manorial system, therefore, we shall consider not only methods of tilling the soil but the people who lived on the manor and the relationships which existed between them, especially between the lord of the manor and the serfs who farmed for him.

Feudalism and the manorial system did not necessarily depend on each other. In fact, the two systems evolved independently, the manorial being established before the end of the ninth century was over, the feudal system taking final shape later than the eleventh. Gras states: "The manor may be said to have four ages. Its growth in England was during the

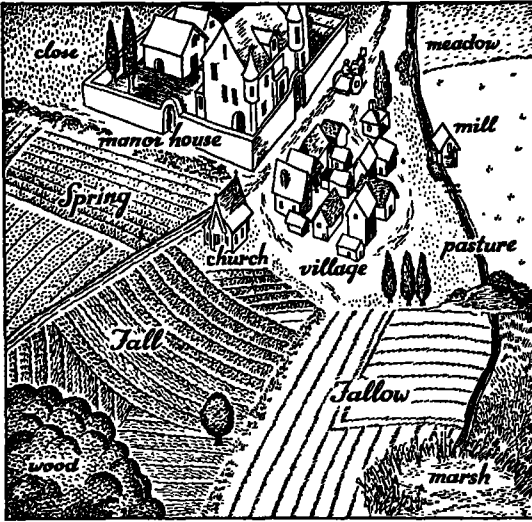
period 800-1200. It was at its height 1200-1300. Decline . . . took place 1300-1500. After 1500 the manor survived only in non-essentials."<sup>12</sup>

However, for the most part medieval feudalism and the manorial system were intimately connected. The feudal system was the means whereby protection was obtained for society, while the manor was the agency which provided the necessary food for the entire feudal system.

**Origins of the manor.** Like feudalism, the manor seems to have had its origins in both Roman and German institutions, with the former making perhaps the greater contribution. From the Roman villa, or *latifundium* (see page 156) came elements of medieval serfdom. The Roman *colonus*, once a freeman, gradually became a serf bound to the soil, a prisoner for debt, because he could never pay off his arrears of rent through daily toil.

The German contribution is not so clearly traced. Some scholars have maintained that the Germans were originally tribes of freemen living in a free village community, the German *mark*. But after the German invasions of the fifth and sixth centuries into Roman territory, these communities sank into serfdom. Other scholars believe that the great mass of Germans were not free in their own lands and that the unfree village was set up in Roman territory. At any rate, we find that the manor of the Middle Ages was a blending of the Roman villa and the German *mark*.

**A typical manor.** The medieval manor was an estate that varied in size from one locality to another. A small one might contain only about a dozen households, but as the allotment to each family averaged about thirty acres, even the smallest manor contained at



least 350 acres, not counting the meadows, woods, wasteland, and the lord's demesne. A large manor might contain fifty families and a total area of five thousand acres. The feudal saying "No lord without land, no land without a lord" is important here. Kings and monasteries might possess hundreds of manors, a noble might have scores, sometimes scattered over whole kingdoms. Therefore one who possessed but one manor, such as the knight, was at the lowest rung of the feudal social ladder.

The center of the manor was the village. The peasants did not live in scattered farmhouses throughout the manor but grouped together closely in thatched cottages along one street. Around each cottage was a space large enough for a vegetable patch, chicken yard, hayrick, and stable. Running through the manor was the stream from the woods, emptying into a pond which became the village duck pond. The lord's demesne would be nearby and would certainly constitute the finest farming land. If the manor was large, the lord's dwelling might be a castle, with the village built up to its walls; if small, there would be a manor house surmounting a knoll on the demesne. An important feature of the landscape was the village church, together with the priest's house and the burial ground.

The fields stretched out from the village, and along the roads the villagers trudged to work. The arable land was divided into three great sections, "the spring planting ground, the autumn planting ground, and the fallow." If one followed the stream to its source, he

came to the woods and the nearby meadowland, areas which were used in common. Altogether the typical manor possessed seven distinct divisions of land:

1. The lord's demesne, owned and used solely by him and cultivated by his serfs.
2. The lord's close, a part of the demesne which he rented out to the villein or tenant cultivators.
3. The tenures of the villagers, scattered in strips among the three fields of arable land.
4. The meadowland, used in common by the peasantry and the lord.
5. The woods, also held in common.
6. The wasteland.
7. The domain of the village priest, or "God's piece." This land was either in one area or scattered in strips, and was cultivated for the priest by the villagers.<sup>13</sup>

**Farming on the manor.** Agriculture is the most important aspect of the manorial system to be considered. It is dangerous to generalize too sweepingly about agricultural methods, because differences in locality, fertility of soil, crop production, and other factors resulted in a variety of farming methods. But if we study farming as practiced in northwest Europe, we can discover some common factors. Farming techniques were quite primitive, although some advances were made with the passage of time. The implements which the peasants used were extremely crude; the plow was a cumbersome affair with heavy wheels, often drawn by as many as eight draft animals in order to break the heavy soil. There were also crude harrows, sickles, beetles for breaking up clods, and flails for threshing. The farmer knew nothing of the value of nitrogen-yielding plants, artificial fertilizers, and scientific crop rotation and had an inadequate supply of manure, with the result that the soil was soon depleted and the crop return poor. It has been estimated that the average yield per acre was only six to eight bushels of wheat, a fourth of the modern yield.

Cultivated grasses and clovers were not known until the seventeenth century; thus the supply of hay in the meadowland was limited to natural grasses. The shortage of hay meant undernourishment of animals, a condition which, together with an ignorance of the principles of proper breeding, kept the livestock

small and weak. The animal most commonly raised on the manor was the pig, which foraged in the forest and devoured the refuse. The peasant often used the ox instead of the horse as a draft animal, for it was cheaper to maintain. The medieval cow was a poor specimen indeed. In the wintertime it was fed on straw and the loppings of trees, a diet which left it so weak that frequently it had to be carried out to pasture in the spring. The supply of milk was small, and the peasants turned most of it into cheese. Sheep were raised, especially in England, while hens, geese, and ducks, as well as bees, were kept by the peasants.

**Crop rotation.** Bitter experience had long ago taught our ancestors that land devoted exclusively and continually to one crop, such as wheat, oats, rye, or barley, would become exhausted in short order. To counteract such a situation, the Greeks had used a three-field system, while the Romans and Germans had made use of the two-field system, whereby the arable land was divided into two portions, one of which would be sowed and the other left to lie fallow to recover its fertility. But at some undetermined date the Middle Ages learned that wheat or rye could be planted in the autumn as well as in the spring, thus doubling the year's crop. It was also discovered that while a continuation of the same crop soon exhausts the soil the alternation of crops does not bleed the land so quickly. It was possible to divide the land into three fields, with two different crops growing at the same time and the third field lying fallow only once in three years instead of every two years. Here is the plan of rotation:

1st year	Field A—wheat	B—oats	C—fallow
2nd "	"	B—wheat	C—oats
3rd "	"	C—wheat	A—oats

The advantages of the three-field system over the two-field have been admirably demonstrated by N. S. B. Gras with the following illustration:

"Let us compare the two systems on a manor containing 1800 acres of arable land. In the two-field system we would have:

900 acres (arable plowed once).....	900
900 acres (fallow plowed twice, to get rid of stubble).....	1800
Total acres of plowing.....	2700

In the three-field system we would have:

600 acres (winter grain plowed once)...	600
---	-----

600 acres (spring grain plowed once)...	600
600 acres (fallow plowed twice, to get rid of stubble).....	1200
Total acres of plowing.....	2400

Thus in the two-field system we get only 900 acres of crops for 2700 acres of plowing, whilst in the three-field system we get 1200 acres of crops for 2400 acres of plowing."<sup>14</sup>

The development of the three-field system has been considered the greatest agricultural contribution of the Middle Ages. While it was never universally practiced, owing to mass inertia or ignorance, it revolutionized agriculture in countries such as England, though here, too, the two-field system did not soon die out.

**Distribution of the land.** From one third to two fifths of the manor was given over to the lord's demesne. The land in the demesne might be sharply set off from the tenures of the villagers, or portions of the demesne might be scattered among the lands of the tenants. The land not held in demesne was allotted among the householders of the village under what is called the open-field system. As we have stated before, the arable land of the manor was divided into three great fields, one for spring planting, the second for fall planting, and the third to be left fallow. The three fields were subdivided into acre strips a furlong in length and four rods wide, or half-acre strips of the same length but only two rods wide. The strips were not individually fenced but were separated from one another by narrow balks of unplowed turf, on which weeds and brambles grew. This unfenced system is called the open-field system.

The peasant's holding varied from place to place, but the average holding was a vir-



*A medieval miniature painting shows serfs at work plowing, harvesting, and gathering fruit.*



gate, or thirty acres. ("Virgate" was the term used in England.) The villein's holding was not in one distinct area, for the fertility of the soil did not remain constant throughout the manor. The villein had the hereditary right to the produce of thirty acres, but no two strips of his virgate lay side by side; ten acres were scattered throughout each of the three fields. The villeins worked together in these large fields, the lord usually supplying the heavy plow and the villagers bringing the oxen required to move it, together with tools, such as axes, according to the size of their holdings. The open-field system was therefore a combination of individual ownership and cooperative labor.

The open-field system was cumbersome and wasteful because the land was cut up so minutely into strips with innumerable balks intervening. On the other hand, the system represented a cooperative agricultural enterprise in which all the resources of the manor were pooled. A serious attempt was made to give to all villagers equally fertile land to cultivate. The same spirit of cooperation forms the basis of the huge cooperatives which exist today in the Soviet Union and some other countries, but there, of course, the farm is worked as one large unit, and there are no dividing "strips" which hinder efficiency and cut down productivity. A more direct relative of the feudal system is that still persisting in some parts of Europe where, like their ancestors, the peasants till their crops in long strips with balks between. And reminders of the old French manorial system may still be seen along the St. Lawrence River, where traces of the strip system persist.

*Pasture, meadow, wood, and waste lands.* Each householder was really a shareholder in the village community, a situation which applied not merely to the open-field system but to the pasture, meadow, wood, and waste lands. Each householder had definite rights in all these divisions of manor lands, and his rights were according to the number of acres he held in the open fields. Each could turn a certain number of animals into the common pasture where they were gathered into one herd and guarded by herdsmen. Pigs foraged in the woods, but each shareholder was limited as to the number of these animals which he might turn loose there. The tenants possessed the privilege of gathering dead wood

there also, but the cutting down of green wood was prohibited unless sanctioned by the lord, who was then paid for his permission. The amount of hay produced in the Middle Ages was not large. Consequently meadow land, where the hay was grown, was at a premium. Therefore this meadow land was divided into strips to correspond with each villager's rightful share, and plots were often apportioned by drawing lots.

*Administration of the manor.* Even though the lord lived on the manor, it was administered through certain of his officials. The most important of these were the steward, or seneschal, the bailiff, the reeve, and the beadle. The steward was the highest of the officials. He was general overseer for all his lord's manors, acted as the lord's legal adviser, supervised the business of the manor by seeing that the usual dues were paid and manorial accounts checked, and presided over the manorial court. The court is an important indication of the lord's independence of the world outside his lands.

Through the steward the lord had complete jurisdiction, civil and criminal, over the non-free inhabitants on his manor. The peasants acted as jurors in the manorial court, but the prestige of the steward gave him ultimate authority. He usually took into account the findings of the peasant jurors. The court treated civil as well as criminal cases, and the custom of a manor was powerful. Justice was severe. Minor offenses brought in fines to the lord, while poaching, arson, murder, and robbery were rewarded with swift and sure hanging. This system of punishment made the steward a much respected and feared person.

Below the steward was the bailiff, who acted as the lord's personal representative on each manor. While the lord had but one steward, who traveled from manor to manor, he had a bailiff on each of his manors to look after his affairs. It was the bailiff's duty to supervise the cultivation of the demesne, to collect rents, dues, and fines, to keep the manor's financial accounts, and to inspect the work done by the peasants.

The reeve was the "foreman" of the villagers, chosen by them and representing their interests. He was responsible to the lord for the services of the tenants and for seeing that the villeins were at the demesne at the proper time for plowing, sowing, and reaping. He

also had to bear to the lord the complaints of the peasants against the other officials and had to cooperate with the bailiff in the distribution of arable land among the peasants and its cultivation.

*The people of the manor.* It is difficult to draw distinctions between some of the various social classes which made up the manor community because they often blurred into one another. But they can be divided roughly into four major categories: the lord and his officials, the free element, the semi-free group, and the small slave class. All classes except the first belonged to the peasantry, for whether free or unfree they were not members of the political feudal society.

*Freemen.* There were always freemen on the manor, however small a proportion of its population they may have represented. They differed from the servile groups by being free from the services demanded of the villein and by possessing personal freedom. The freeman did not have to work in the lord's fields himself but could send substitutes. He paid a cash rent for his holding and was free to dispose of his land as he pleased, provided the transfer took place in open court in the lord's presence and the new tenant was acceptable to the lord. Aside from these privileges, however, the freeman was little different from the villein. He had to cultivate strips which adjoined those of the servile worker, and he lived in a cottage in the same village. The freeman class was very small in the twelfth century, but from then on it grew rapidly through emancipation of the lower classes.

*Serfs.* The semi-free persons of the manor are generally referred to as serfs. These people were bound to the soil of the lord and could not leave the manor without his consent. Serfdom was a hereditary status, the children of a serf being likewise attached to the soil. In the event of a marriage between a serf and a free-woman, the children would generally be considered serfs, although in certain instances such a marriage would elevate the children to the status of freemen. The position of the individuals in question depended upon the local custom of the manor.

Among the semi-free class, however, were certain families who enjoyed privileges not possessed by the common serfs. This upper crust of the serf class was made up of the villeins. "In status the villeins were unfree. They

might not leave the manor, marry their daughters to men on other manors or to freemen on the same manor, or send their sons to learn a handicraft or to enter the Church; they might not do these things without securing the lord's permission, usually obtained, however, on the payment of a fine."<sup>15</sup>

In England the words "villein" and "serf" meant the same. Elsewhere, however, the serf held a lower social rank. Whereas the villein was in theory free as to his person and "often resembled rather the Roman *colonus*," the serf, "like the Roman *servus*, was the bodily property of a master."<sup>16</sup> The serf was subject to greater exploitation than the villein and had fewer privileges.

Although the status of the common serf was quite low, he was not a slave. The lord of the manor was bound by the force of custom to respect certain rights of his serfs. So long as they paid him certain dues and labor services, serfs could not be evicted from the lands they cultivated. Although a serf could not appear in court against his lord or against a freeman, he could appeal to the manor court against any of his fellows.

*Slaves.* In the lowest class of manorial society were the slaves. In most regions they represented a very small proportion of the peasant population. The slave was the absolute chattel of the lord and could be bought and sold without reference to his connection with any particular plot of ground. He possessed no legal personality which would permit him to appear in court. The slave class gradually became extinct in the later Middle Ages, being absorbed by and elevated into the lowest rung of serfdom. Just as the slaves were raised to the status of serfs, so as time went on, the classes of villein and serf tended to merge, the former pulling the latter up to his level and both finally attaining the rank of freemen.

*The lord and his privileges.* The lord of the manor was its proprietor. In other words, whereas the peasants found in the manor their economic, political, legal, and social life, the lord considered it chiefly as the means whereby he received his income. This income came from obligations imposed on the peasantry, which was divided into three main classes: (1) services rendered in the form of the peasant's own labor, (2) dues levied on the peasant, and (3) manorial monopolies.

The most important personal service was



*Schilling's Swiss Chronicle contained this picture of a medieval mint. Strips of metal were flattened, trimmed to coin size, and the faces stamped.*

week-work, known in France as the *corvée*. The peasant had to donate his services, consisting of two to three days' work each week for the lord. The lord's demesne had prior rights, and nobody on the manor ever dared argue the point. Involved in the week-work might be the task of repairing roads or bridges or carting manure to the fields. Because the lord's demesne "had always to be plowed first, sowed first, and reaped first," during the season of sowing or harvesting, the peasant was forced to perform extra work, in addition to week-work, called boon-work. He did not get paid for either of the services, but during boon-days his meals were generally provided free by the lord. Serfs and villeins had to contribute their services, while the freemen, exempt usually from week-work, had to provide substitutes to work for them on boon-days.

Various payments were made to the lord, either in money or in produce. The *taille* (or *tallage*) was the most common manorial levy.

It could be imposed on grain, stock, chickens, and beeswax, and freeman, villein, and serf were thus taxed one or more times a year. The poor serf was taxable to the limit of the lord's mercy (*taillable à merci*), although the *taille* became a fixed sum for freeman and villein. A burdensome tax was often imposed whenever a peasant died. Before the widow or son could inherit the cottage, the lord claimed, as inheritance tax, the best beast or movable possession. Such a tax was known as the *heriot*.

In addition to services, taxes, and dues the lord received, he was the richer for certain monopolies. A toll was collected each time the serf or villein brought his grain to be ground at the lord's mill, baked his bread in the lord's oven, or used the lord's press for his wine and cider. The peasant was prohibited from taking his grain, flour, or fruit elsewhere, for that would deprive his lord of revenue. Further, since no peasant or group of peasants could have afforded, or would have been allowed, to set up mills, ovens, or presses, the lord's control of these essential services was a monopoly of the most rigid kind. The lord also made money by his monopoly of the right to sell wine at certain times in the village.

**Money.** Following the fall of the Roman empire, commerce and manufacturing rapidly declined. This tended to restrict the use of money. As most manors were self-sufficient and had little economic contact with the outside world, money was hard to get and equally difficult to use. But while restricted in its use, money never entirely died out in the early Middle Ages. The Frankish kings, for example, had a system of coinage based upon that of the Romans. Since money was scarce in Europe, the peasants usually paid most of their taxes to their lord in produce, but as commerce and city life developed, especially after the thirteenth century, the use of money rapidly increased and it became easier for the peasants to obtain it for payments.

**Self-sufficiency of the manor.** Economically the manor was almost self-sufficient. The food essential to the sustenance of the population, such as the staple grains, wheat, rye, oats, and barley, could be grown at home. Flax was cultivated where rainfall was sufficient. Among the vegetables most common to the manor were turnips, peas, onions, parsley, sage, celery, beans, and cabbage, while the fruits included apples, quinces, plums, cherries, and pears.

Famines were common, warfare and wolves were a constant threat, grasshoppers, locusts, caterpillars, and rats destroyed crops endlessly. There was no adequate protection against animal diseases. Communication with the outside world was extremely limited, because of bad roads and other dangers of travel. Leather for boots was tanned on the manor, clothing was spun at home, and other necessary communal jobs were performed by the village miller, butcher, carpenter, and smith.

The manor lived on a barter economy, but such commodities as salt, iron, and millstones had to be imported and were generally procured from one of the country fairs. Money did exist although "it was not until towns were well developed, feudalism decaying, and nationalism growing strong, that money economy was enthroned on the manor."<sup>17</sup> Journeys outside the community, as well as the arrival of a pilgrim who had traveled to far-away shrines, or a recent bride from another manor, all gave the inhabitants glimpses of the outside world so that they were by no means completely isolated. But the manor remained the center of the peasants' lives. Many of them never left its confines. The manor was not only a relatively self-sufficient economic and social unit but the judicial, administrative, and religious center as well. The parish priest was the spiritual father, and the small church represented the medieval link between the sorrows of this world and the pleasures of the next.

**Peasant life.** The life of the peasant was not easy. Men and women alike had to toil long hours in the fields, and the crudity of agricultural implements made their tasks much harder. The squalor of the peasant's life was reflected in his cottage. His home had a wooden frame with mud walls, a clay floor, and a thatched roof. The fire was on a hearthstone, flat on the middle of the floor, and unless the peasant was rich enough to afford a chimney, the smoke escaped through a hole in the roof. The windows had no glass and were stuffed with straw in the winter. Furnishings were meager, consisting usually of a table, a bed, a kneading trough for dough, and a cupboard. The bed was often either a heap of straw or a box filled with straw, and it was used by the entire family. Pigs and chickens wandered about the cottage continually, while the stable was frequently under the same roof, next to the family quarters. It is not difficult

to imagine the sights, sounds, and smells that must have greeted the visitor as he picked his way down the crooked village street past the pile of refuse and manure that lay in front of each cottage. The Middle Ages were not clean by our standards, but even by the standards of feudal nobility the peasant was filthy.

The peasant's food was coarse and not overplentiful. He seldom obtained fresh meat and usually had salt pork in its stead. Porridge, soups, and cheese comprised most of his meals, washed down with cheap wine, beer, or cider.

The peasant was illiterate and superstitious. Like almost everyone else, he believed in the power of witchcraft and chanted strange doggerel verses to guard against "spells" or to exterminate such pests as caterpillars and rats:

Aius, sanctus,  
Cardia cardianil  
Mouse and she-mouse,  
Hamster, mole,  
Marmot, cony,  
Young and old  
Leave the land,  
I command.  
You are banned!  
Up above and down below  
From the fields get you hence,  
Pestilence!  
Go with you, where'er you go,  
Afrias, aestrias, palamiasit!<sup>18</sup>

**Peasant amusements.** There was no love lost between the peasantry and nobility. The latter considered that the serf and villein had been born inferior to themselves in every respect and that God had meant it to be so. Hence the noble and peasant did not share in each other's amusements. But the peasant, despite his hard and monotonous life, was not without compensatory pleasures. The churchyard sometimes witnessed communal dances during the many holy days, and the peasants occasionally traveled to the fairs, which they found exciting. Wrestling was exceedingly popular, as were cockfighting and fighting with quarterstaves, in which both of the contestants stood an excellent chance of getting their heads bashed in. Football of a crude type was played, and everyone attended the pageants and entertainments put on by wandering actors and minstrels.

Around the porch of the parish church the peasants would often congregate to dance and sing. The Church preached in vain against



*Although these people are somewhat above the peasant class, their home is still bare of adornment and has very little furniture. This picture is from the House Book of the Cerrutti family, fourteenth century.*

"ballads and dancings and evil and wanton songs and such-like lures of the Devil." The peasants refused to give up these amusements, which were little compensation for the constant exploitation which they suffered.

However, it is unwise to generalize too broadly when we evaluate the life of the peasants. Some nobles were kind, and some were merciless, and their tenants suffered or prospered accordingly. While it was bad business to treat one's peasants so poorly that they were rendered unfit for labor, the view generally prevailed that the peasantry should spend their lives toiling for the upper classes.

**Peasant revolts.** Throughout the Middle Ages the peasants generally remained quiet, although they were discontented and often on the point of revolt. On several occasions they did resort to force in an attempt to better their lot. Serious rebellions of serfs took place in

England and France in the fourteenth century and later in central Europe in the sixteenth. During the early part of the fourteenth century a large number of village priests incited the peasants in England to rise and sweep away their unjust masters. The most famous was John Ball, the "Mad Priest," who preached to the peasants that things would not be just until all things were shared in common and all distinctions were leveled. The poem *Piers Plowman* aptly summarized the growing criticism of the peasants toward their lords. The medieval rhyme asked:

When Adam delfed and Eve span,  
Who was then the gentleman?

The Peasants' Revolt in 1381 in England was a great upsurge that threatened for a time to bring about a social revolution. The discontent of the English peasants flared into open revolt in June 1381, and led by their leader Wat Tyler the serfs marched through southeastern England pillaging manor houses and even mobbing one royal chief justice. The masses controlled London for a few days, but gradually the nobles gained command of the situation, and in the end the movement was savagely crushed. In France and Germany on the few occasions when the peasants did revolt, the upper classes likewise crushed the movement with great ferocity. The rights of the common man were not to be recognized for over five hundred years.

**The manorial system appraised.** Yet the manorial system had many admirable aspects. It fostered the development of the most important of all mediæval agricultural contributions, the three-field system. It encouraged cooperation in the tilling of the fields, which gave solidarity to peasant society. That solidarity in turn afforded even the lowliest member of the peasantry an economic security which many a modern farmer or worker would envy. The twentieth-century curse of poverty in the midst of plenty was not the curse of the twelfth-century manor. The latter never had much more than a bare subsistence, but its society tended to suffer or prosper together.

### *The Revival of Towns and Trade*

**Cities and civilization.** The growth of town life is synonymous with a quickening of the tempo of civilization. The history of man proves this fact, whether we examine the civ-

ilizations of Egypt, ancient India, Mesopotamia, Greece, Rome, or Byzantium.

Their large cities have been the focal points of civilization in the past. Today we find that

civilization has tended to center in London, New York, Paris, Berlin, Moscow, Buenos Aires, Sydney, Shanghai, Calcutta, and Tokyo. The city, large or small, has always been the center of new ideas, new inventions, new classes of people, new styles of dress, new tastes in food, new schemes in politics and economics, new ventures in trade, and new contacts in culture. Civilization has experienced more radical changes since the era of the Commercial Revolution in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries than in all preceding years, and since that time life has become predominantly urban. The city has been one of man's chief aids in creating cultural changes. As we are about to discover, the modern city owes its existence to its medieval ancestor, as does the class of society that has controlled and modified our modern social pattern, the bourgeoisie.

**The decline of the Roman city.** To understand the importance of the revival of town life in the Middle Ages, we must remember that the civilization of the Roman empire was largely concentrated in cities. With the empire's collapse, trade was disrupted, manufacturing languished, and city life became almost extinct. The pleasant Roman town of Bath in England, for example, became completely depopulated. As for Rome herself, her population declined from about a million to less than fifty thousand.

City life is based on economic specialization. City dwellers concentrate upon the production of certain commodities or engage in wholesale and retail selling and are dependent upon the country for raw materials and for food. At the same time, the farming folk obtain their textiles and other goods from the city. The disruption of trade and the general confusion attending the deterioration of the Roman empire destroyed the complementary economy of town and country. So a back-to-the-soil movement began, and the manorial system arose to take care of the people's economic wants, just as the feudal system, in the absence of strong centralized authority, developed to provide for their political needs.

**The rise of the medieval city.** In the tenth century towns began to spring up throughout Europe, and by the end of the twelfth they had surpassed many of the cities of the Roman empire in size and prosperity. The renewal of town life occurred first in three areas: northern Italy, Flanders, and southern France.

**The Italian towns.** Venice in northern Italy has a fascinating history. In the fifth century a group of refugees fleeing from the Huns made their way to the northern shores of the Adriatic. They settled in the midst of mud flats and small islands. Stretching as a barrier between the settlements and the sea were many sand dunes which prevented an attack from pirates, while between them and the mainland was a barrier of lagoons and sandbanks. By 1100 Venice consisted of 117 islands connected by 378 bridges. She controlled a vast fleet of merchant vessels and had achieved a prosperity at once the envy and despair of other towns in Europe.

But Venice was not the only town in northern Italy to achieve importance early in the Middle Ages. Milan by 1200 had a population of 12,000, Genoa had become especially active in the trade of the western Mediterranean, and Pisa and Bologna were also becoming flourishing towns. A little to the south was the important manufacturing center of Florence, soon to become a great banking center. In 1281 its population was about 45,000.

**French and Flemish towns.** If northern Italy was the most important center of town life in the Middle Ages, Flanders was not far behind. In fact, Flanders has been called the Lombardy of northern Europe. Here a number of towns grew up in the early Middle Ages, mainly because of the manufacture of textiles. Lisle from Lille and cambric from Cambrai soon became famous all over Europe. The raw wool for these textiles was obtained from England. It is known that by 1200 Bruges, Ghent, Lille, and Ypres, all Flemish towns, each had populations of many thousands.

Next in importance to the towns of northern Europe were those in southern France. In such towns on the Mediterranean as Marseilles, trade and manufacturing created prosperous urban centers rivaling those in Flanders and northern Italy.

As the Flemish towns increased in population and wealth, trade and industry spread up the Rhine valley and influenced the growth of such towns as Cologne and Basel. Most of these towns, however, had a population of only 5000 even as late as 1300. The northern German ports of Hamburg, Lübeck, and Bremen had a slightly larger population, perhaps 12,000 at the most. In central France such

river towns as Paris, Orléans, and Tours were slowly increasing in importance. London, England's largest center, destined to be the world's greatest metropolis, had fewer than 25,000 inhabitants in 1200.

**The origin of the medieval town.** Generally speaking, town life in western Europe between 500 and 800 was moribund and of little importance. But the next two centuries saw its active revival, and from 1000 to 1200 the town again became an invaluable agency in the growth of trade, the development of manufacturing, and the nurturing of art and thought. How can the revival of urban civilization be explained? The answer to this question, like the answer to questions about many great historical processes, is not a simple one and can best be given by examining certain basic social, geographical, and economic factors. Let us examine these briefly, keeping in mind that town development differed in various localities according to environment, traditions, and local situations.

**Social factors.** Perhaps the most striking of the social factors was the growth of population. The population of Europe after the fall of Rome is estimated at 30,000,000, whereas it reached 60,000,000 by 1300. France in 1300 had some 20,000,000 inhabitants, Italy 10,000,000, the Low Countries 3,000,000, and England 2,200,000. England had increased its population only 1,000,000 in the two hundred years from 1100 to 1300. The rapid increase in population has not been satisfactorily explained, but some reasons for it might be the stabilization of feudal society with its furtherance of public safety, the ending of large foreign invasions with their bloodshed and confusion, and a general raising of the standard of living for the common people through increased trade. In any case, the growth of population had an important bearing on the growth of town and commercial activities.

Another social factor was the decline of serfdom, a phenomenon we have already alluded to on page 321. The increase in the number of freemen allowed persons to enter new occupations and migrate to scenes of industrial growth.

**Geographical factors.** Geography played an important role in the revival of town life. It determined the location of certain strategic towns and conditioned very largely the type of commercial activities in which a town

would engage. Just as rivers were important in the growth of ancient civilizations, so rivers played an important role in the development of European towns. They were natural highways on which articles of commerce could be easily transported, and many communities arose to take advantage of a site at the confluence of two important streams. Again, some towns arose where a river might be easily crossed by a ford or bridge, Ox-ford, or Cambridge, for example. Situations at a mountain pass, near natural resources, or on a part of the seacoast which afforded good harbors were also desirable. The location of Italian towns on the great water routes of the Mediterranean, by which trade to the Near East and Africa was open to them, proved of inestimable value. And many towns in Europe grew out of small communities that clustered for protection near some castle already built on a strategic site by mountain or river.

**Economic factors.** The growth of trade and of manufacturing was probably the most important reason why town life revived. It can be said that town and trade had an interacting influence upon each other, so that the revival of one meant the revival of the other. Throughout the eleventh century there were signs of ever-growing commercial activity, especially in the expansion of special trade routes. Venetian merchants in Italy had been in touch with the Near East since the seventh century, but the dominance of Mohammedan seapower had for a long time hindered the growth of a lucrative trade with Constantinople and Asia Minor. In 1002 Venice defeated the Moslems and opened up the eastern Mediterranean. Meanwhile the Italians and Normans swept the Saracen pirates from the western end of the Mediterranean and the Normans conquered Sicily. By 1100 the sea routes to the Near East were open to the Italian merchants, while thousands of pilgrims and the various crusades of the next two centuries added to the new commerce.

Another great system of trade routes opened up now that Asia and Europe were linked together. The new routes ran overland by the old Roman highways that crossed the Alps northward from Italy via passes that led on the west to the Rhone and on the east to the Rhine and Danube valleys. Other land routes followed what are now the southern French and Dalmatian seacoasts. A third great sys-

tem of trade routes was established by the Vikings in the ninth century, when they made settlements in Russia and created the famous and very lucrative Varangian route, through Russia to the Black Sea and Constantinople. Wherever an important trade route existed, towns sprang up along the way to take care of the commerce.

Throughout feudal Europe there were military strongholds which had been built by various lords for purposes of protection. The German word for such an edifice was *burg*, and the Latin word was *burgus*. The military fort, the typical burg of the ninth and tenth centuries, had no real urban features. But during the next two centuries, when the revival of commerce took place, merchants making their way along the trade routes would seek out a stopping place which would be advantageous to commercial activities and at the same time afford them protection. Therefore they would choose a well-situated burg, and as time elapsed, permanent merchant colonies would grow up at such strongholds. In Flanders, Ghent and Ypres are typical examples of this sort of development. In Germany, Magdeburg and other towns grew up in the same way, while England had such *boroughs* (from *burh*) as Bristol. Sometimes a fortified abbey or cathedral could afford protection, like Durham, "half cathedral and half fortress against the Scot."

In time the merchant population grew too big to be housed within the old burg's walls, and so the merchants established a new burg beyond the walls. This new section, called the *faubourg*, was inhabited by merchants and artisans. The old burg still remained the abode of the noble or bishop with his retinue of soldiers and officials. Therefore when we talk about the origins of the town, we refer to the new burg, which came into existence after the eleventh century, and not to the old burg or fortified section. As time went on, the old stronghold failed to grow larger but the new portion, the trade center, developed into the modern town.

**The townspeople.** The town was composed mainly of two classes, the artisans, or producers, and the merchants. The artisans composed a majority of the urban population. The revival of trade naturally encouraged the growth of industry and the rise of an artisan class. Many serfs escaped from the manors and

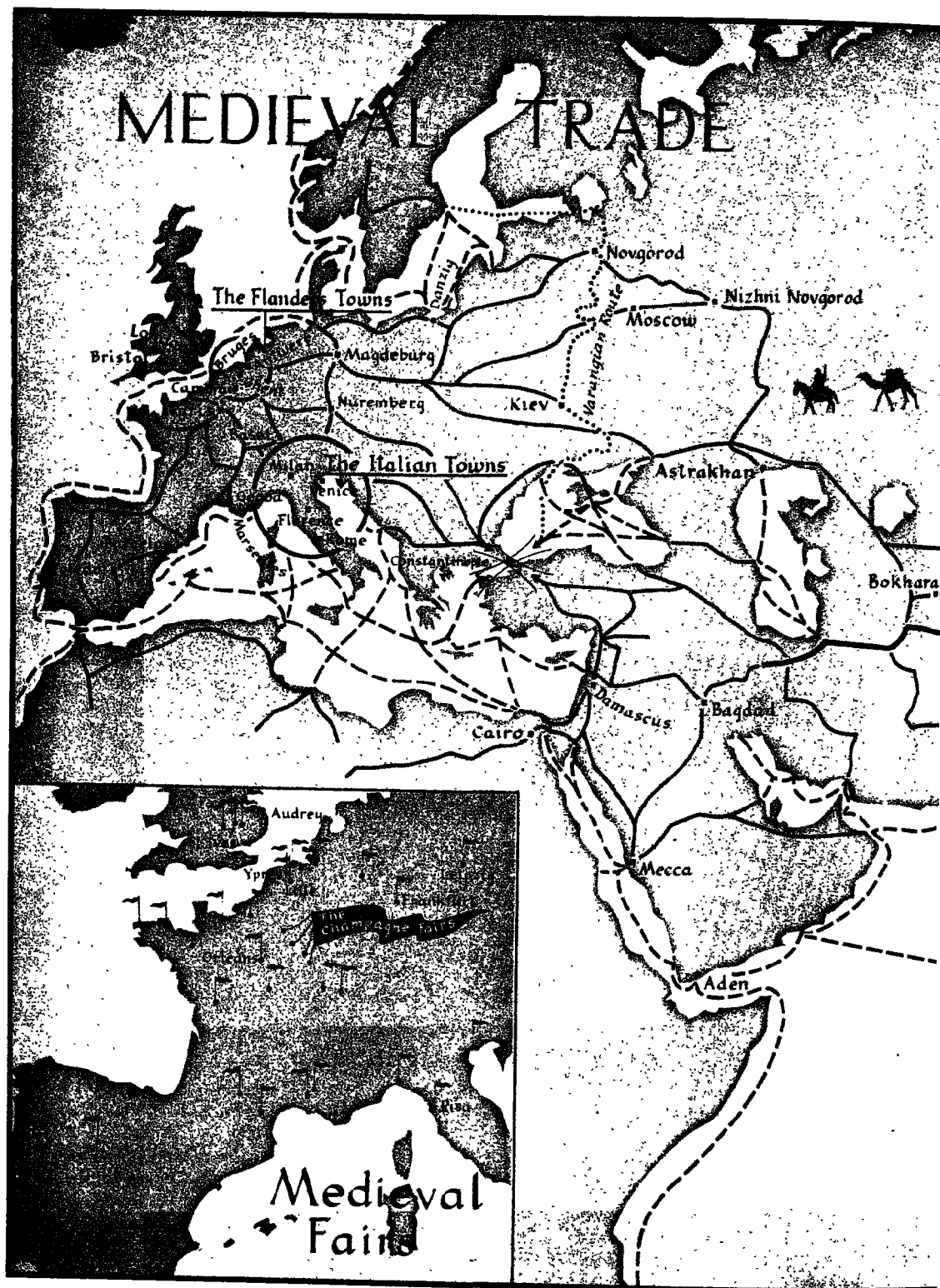
made their way to the towns, to become artisans or merchants. After living a year and a day in the town a serf was considered a free man. It became possible for a former serf to become a wealthy and influential craftsman or merchant.

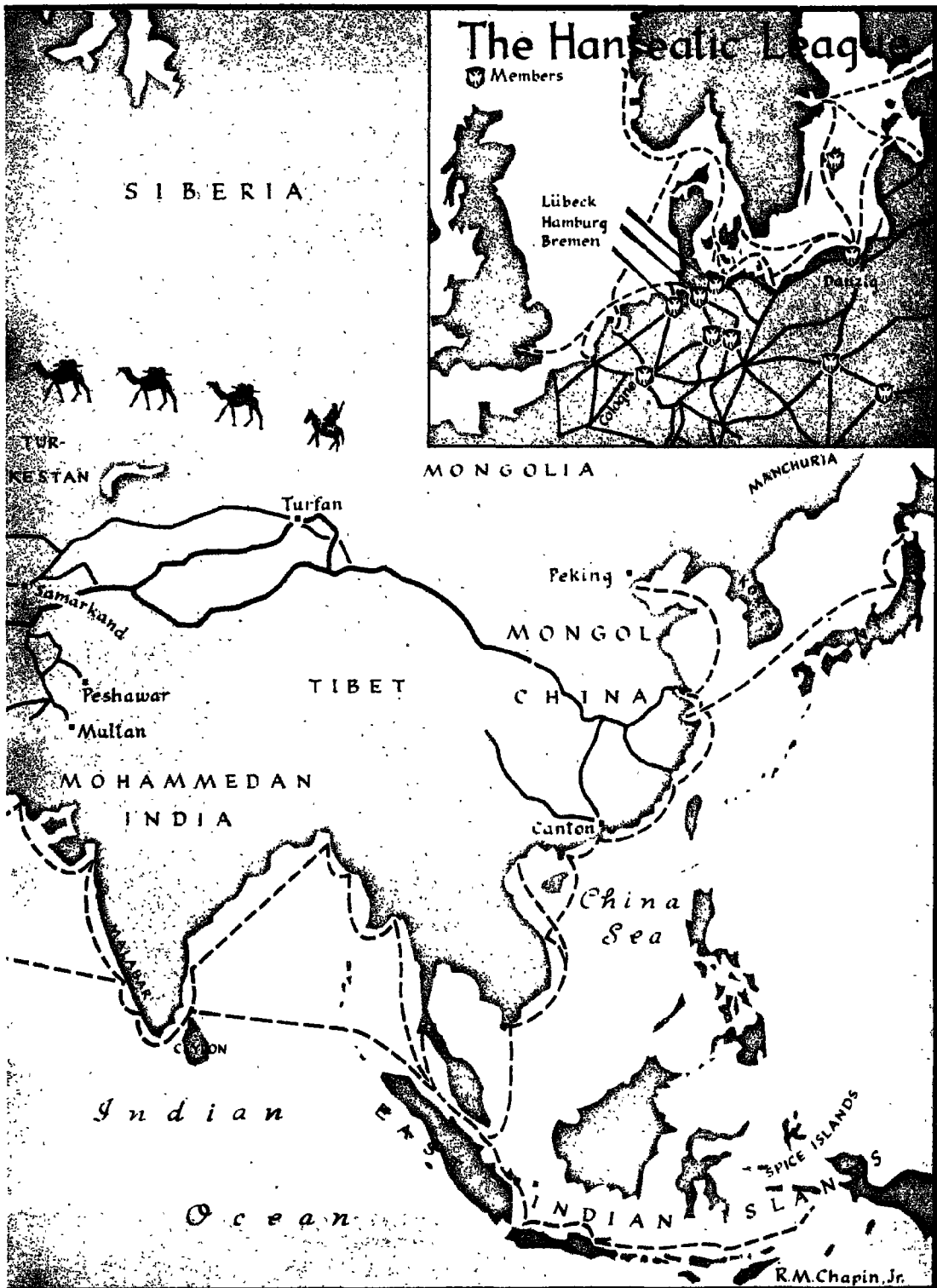
The merchant class was a distinct social group by the twelfth century. It was composed of those traders who lived in one place permanently and those who journeyed from place to place selling their wares. But artisans and merchants alike were under the domination of the lord upon whose domain the city stood. Friction soon arose, for manorial customs differed widely from those of the town. The merchants wanted to be free of the market tolls and dues imposed by the lord, for they did not cultivate the soil and therefore felt that they should not be taxed by the lord like peasants. So the townsmen demanded the privileges of making their own laws and governing themselves, administering justice for themselves, levying their own taxes, and issuing their own coinage. Naturally the feudal lord resented the impertinence of the urban upstarts who dared demand the right of self-government. The entire movement was really the struggle of the new burg to free itself from dependence on the old burg.

**The towns' struggle for freedom.** The townspeople gained their freedom in the following ways. The expansion of trade during the crusades had made the northern Italian cities large and very wealthy. The merchants resented the dominance of the lord, and they created a "businessman's government" by grouping themselves into associations of free citizens. The united strength of these unions enabled them to wrest concessions from the lord and even to win complete autonomy. A self-governing city of this type was called a *commune*. Often the privileges gained and guaranteed by charter had to be won by insurrection, but at other times they were purchased, for the feudal lord was always in need of money. By 1200 the Lombard towns could boast of communal privileges, while many French and Flemish towns were also communes.

In England, central France, and parts of Germany another technique was used to secure urban autonomy. There the royal authority was strong, and so we find the rise of privileged towns. In a charter granted to the town by







the monarch the inhabitants won extensive legal and financial powers. The town was given the management of its own fiscal business and paid its taxes in a lump sum to the king. It was also generally given the right to elect its own officials and organize its own guilds. The king often was glad to grant such a charter, for it weakened the power of his nobles and at the same time won the strong support of the townsmen for himself.

Founding new towns was still another way in which people freed themselves of medieval restrictions. By the twelfth century it was obvious that the town was there to stay. Consequently shrewd lords and ecclesiastics, who recognized the increasing importance of cities and the impossibility of checking their development, founded carefully planned centers with well-laid-out streets and open squares. As a means of obtaining inhabitants many inducements were offered in the form of personal privileges and tax limitations. Berlin was such a town.

The triumph of the townsmen in their struggle for greater self-government was significant. It meant that a new class had evolved in Europe, a very powerful, independent, and self-assured class, whose interest in trade instead of warfare was to revolutionize all social and economic history. This class was born of the burg and hence was called burgher or in French, as it is known today, the *bourgeoisie*. The town movement was indeed a people's movement, and with it (if not through it) went the fall of feudalism, the waning of the Middle Ages, and the advent of modern society.

**The guilds.** We have now seen how the towns won autonomy and how the townsmen emerged as a distinct social class whose prime concern was with commerce and industry. We can logically examine next the means whereby the townsmen organized and administered their own business relations. The association they created for the furtherance of their economic and social interests was called the guild. More important to us than its origins (disputed among scholars) are the economic and social aspects of the medieval guild. The guild was designed to solve all employer-worker problems, regulate prices and wages, govern production and distribution, create a code of fair business practices, protect the individual member as a business associate, and assure the social status of

his family.<sup>19</sup> There were two kinds of guilds: merchant and craft.

**The merchant guild.** The fundamental purpose of the merchant guild was to ensure monopoly of trade within a given locality. Membership was usually limited to merchants of a particular town, although members were sometimes permitted from other places. With a monopoly of the town's import and export trade the guild could enforce its standards as it willed. All alien merchants were supervised closely and made to pay fixed tolls and fees. Weights and measures were also supervised. Disputes among merchants were settled at the guild court according to its own legal code. A standard quality for goods was insisted upon, and a legitimate profit only was allowed by the fixing of a "just price," which should be fair both to the producer and consumer. Three practices in particular were frowned upon, and the guilds did their best to limit their operation; they were forestalling, engrossing, and regrating. The forestaller bought goods on their way to the open market in order to get them more cheaply; the engrosser cornered the market so as to enjoy a monopoly and raise the price; and the regrater bought his commodity wholesale and sold it retail without having made any change in the commodity itself.

The merchant guild was officially separated from the town government, but as the leading members of the guild were generally the officials of the town, the policies of both tended to merge, to the benefit of the guild and sometimes at the expense of the urban populace. The guild performed various social and charitable functions. If a guildsman fell into poverty, he was aided. If he was imprisoned in another town, the guild tried to secure his release, at its own expense. It provided financial assistance in connection with the burial expenses of its members and looked after their dependents. Guildsmen had their own guildhall, where social meetings were held, and each member was expected to attend the feast and "drink the guild" or be fined. The guilds had also a religious side and periodically held processions in honor of their patron saints. They performed such social duties as giving alms to friars and lepers, the poor and sick.

The chief merit of the guild was its emphasis upon fair business practices and its protection to the individual trader, for without the guild he would always have been at

the mercy of the local lord. When the guild first grew up, there was no central government adequate to protect merchants as they carried on their trading activities throughout the land. In the absence of national regulation and protection of commerce, the guilds as local agencies had to try to protect their members. Thus if a merchant of a London guild refused to pay a debt owed to a merchant of a guild in Bristol, the merchant guild in the latter town would seize the goods of any London merchant coming to Bristol. Just as political activities were localized in fiefs in the absence of a central government, so the commercial life of a country was decentralized in the hands of the guilds. Thus the fief, the manor, and the guild were all manifestations of one basic characteristic of the Middle Ages—decentralization.

As the Middle Ages drew to a close, when the kings began to assert their power, national regulation of commerce made the guilds less important. By the fifteenth century, when the central government had taken over control of local government and could afford adequate protection, the merchant guild declined to a comparatively unimportant position.

**The craft guild.** The increase of commerce brought a quickening of industrial life in the towns so that, in the eleventh century especially, an artisan class arose within the city walls. Craftsmen in each of the necessary medieval trades—weaving, cobbling, tanning, and so on—began to organize. The result was the craft guild, which had the same purposes as the merchant guild—the creation of a monopoly and the enforcement of a set of trade rules. But it differed from the merchant guild in that it was limited to one specific trade or craft. Thus the goldsmiths were all together in one guild, the arrow makers in another, and so on with each variety of artisanship. The system created a great deal of specialization, so that a “guild might specialize in a single kind of hat, as the peacock-hatters did.” Each guild had a monopoly of a certain article in a particular town, and regulations were enforced to protect the consumer from bad workmanship and inferior materials. Thus articles made at night or in private and out of sight were rightly regarded with suspicion, for as L. F. Salzman points out,

“The subtle craft of the London bakers, who, while making up their customers’ dough,



*The maker of these larger-than-life thimbles (Nuremberg, fifteenth century) was probably a member of one of the highly-specialized medieval guilds.*

stole a large portion of the dough under their customers’ eyes by means of a little trap-door in the kneading-board and a boy sitting under the counter, was exceptional only in its ingenuity. . . . Cloth was stretched and strained to the utmost and cunningly folded to hide defects; a length of bad cloth would be joined onto a length of superior quality, or a whole cheap cloth substituted for the good cloth which the customers had purchased; inferior leather was faked up to look like the best, and sold at night to the unwary; pots and kettles were made of bad metal which melted when put on the fire; and everything that could be weighed or measured was sold by false measure.”<sup>20</sup>

Faulty workmen were fined for the first offense and, if old offenders, were pilloried or banished.

The craft guild had social and religious functions similar to those of the merchant guild. It differed from the merchant guild in that it recognized three distinct classes of workers within its jurisdiction—apprentice, journeyman, and master craftsman. The relationship between the master and his work-

and ran the continual risk of pirates. If the ship should be driven ashore in a storm, we might have our cargo confiscated under the pernicious "law of wreck," which gave the lord upon whose shore we were cast the right to keep all merchandise. Profits encouraged gangs of professional wreckers purposely to change lights on the seacoast to lure vessels to their graves, while the wreckers made certain that no survivor would recount the incident.

*The fair.* But if the traveler were not too unlucky, he might manage to get safely to the fair. The fair differed from the market, which was a distinctly local affair held about once a week to allow the peasants to dispose of surplus goods from the manor and obtain manufactured goods from the town. The fair was a much more important and elaborate event, held in certain specified areas in each European country only seasonally or annually. To the fairs came products from all over Europe, and these gatherings did much to promote industry and agriculture. Strict regulations governed fair activities—stall locations, the days and hours when certain types of goods might be sold, the acceptable weights, measures, and coinage, and the proper forms which made transactions and contracts valid. Fees and fines were also fixed, and a special tax was paid by the Jews. The regular laws governing the region were set aside when the fair was held, and in their place was substituted a commercial code called the law merchant. Special courts settled all disputes which arose. In England they were called pie-powder courts, from the French *pie-poudré*, dusty foot.

The receipts from the courts, together with the local fees and taxes, went into the coffers of the lord in whose territory the fair was being held. This was a prime reason why the holding of fairs was so encouraged. The most famous fairs in all Europe were held in Champagne in northeastern France, but there were many others: Leipzig and Frankfurt in Germany, Venice and Genoa in Italy, Ypres

and Lille in the Low Countries, Seville in Spain, and St. Ives in England. The word "tawdry" is derived from a corruption of the words "St. Audrey," the name of a medieval English fair where cheap goods were often sold.

The fair was of great value. It was a clearing house for both goods and ideas. Men from all over Europe congregated and exchanged information about new methods in industry and transportation. The fairs were largely responsible for the growing use of bills of exchange, letters of credit, and a money economy. They helped break down the provincialism of the manor and the isolation of the town.

*The Hanseatic League.* The merchants were a new element in the medieval pattern of society. In establishing their rights and seeking privileges in foreign towns they often banded together for mutual benefit and protection. In similar fashion groups of towns occasionally joined forces to establish their merchants in foreign towns and win them preferred treatment. During the thirteenth century such a confederacy, called the Hanseatic League, originated among north German trading cities, including Cologne, Lübeck, Danzig, and Hamburg. As the League grew in strength it began to include other large river towns. It established permanent trading stations in such leading European centers as London and Bruges and in strategic locations like Novgorod, key town for Russian trade. As political authority in Germany was weak, the Hanseatic League built up its own navy to safeguard its commerce from pirates and even waged successful wars against Denmark. It had a representative diet, or assembly, for dealing with trading problems common to all member cities. Its wealth came primarily from its monopoly of the Baltic herring fisheries, its control of Russian trade, and its rich trade with England and the Low Countries. The League controlled trade on the Baltic and North seas and was a great distributor for northern Europe until the fifteenth century.

### Summary

The castle, manor, and town represent three great medieval institutions. With the castle we associate feudalism, a political system of decentralization of power which brought a measure of order to the chaos that engulfed Europe after the collapse of the Carolingian empire. The feudal system involved a social and political hierarchy in which there existed lords and vassals according to a complicated system of loyalty and land tenure.

With the castle too we link its lordly inhabitants and the social code known as chivalry. The castle epitomizes the power of the aristocracy.

Evolving independently of feudalism but linked to it economically was the manor. The manor's origins appear to be Roman (the villa) and German (the *mark*). The most important advance in agriculture, the three-field system, was developed on the manor. Most manors were practically self-sufficient. Under the supervision of the lord and his staff, food was raised, clothing was made, and justice was administered. The village priest watched over the welfare of the people. While most of the common people lived in superstition and squalor, their lives were not wholly without gaiety or comfort.

The castle and the manor passed away in time because of the rise of the national state and because of the growth of trade and industry which made possible the introduction of a money economy and the increase of freemen. But the third institution, the town, continued to flourish, until today our culture is more urban than rural. The medieval town lived primarily by its trade and industry. The townsmen had to struggle for their freedom against the feudal lords. Their victory marks the rise of a new class which increasingly dominated the affairs of modern life—the bourgeoisie, or middle class. The townsmen were organized into merchant and craft guilds according to their profession. The guilds regulated trade and industry, maintaining standards and privileges as well. Life in the medieval town was colorful and interesting, much more attractive than the drab existence led by the manorial peasants. In a rather static and stratified society, the townspeople were an alive and changing element.

We seem removed from the medieval castle, manor, and town, perhaps, until we discover that the people who lived there were as human as we. We can feel the resentment of the serf through whose painfully tilled fields the nobles swept in search of sport, and we can laugh at the games of the manor villein and the pranks of the town apprentice. But our bonds with the Middle Ages go much deeper. The code of chivalry, despite its artificiality and limited scope, has lived on in modified form and affected our social behavior. The farm measurements of the manor are the same measurements which we use today. The development of the three-field system made possible an agricultural revolution whose benefits we are still reaping. Finally, the medieval town, with its emphasis upon individual initiative and rights and its shattering of traditions, was the melting pot of revolutionary forces from which the urban civilization which we know has arisen.

## THE MEDIEVAL CHURCH: 300-1214

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### Growth of the Church

4th century	Monasticism grows popular in west
4th and 5th centuries	Church hierarchy established: except College of Cardinals
6th century	Important achievements of Pope Gregory I
	Checks advance of Lombards
	Sends missionaries to Anglo-Saxons
c.520	St. Benedict founds monastery at Monte Cassino
800	Pope crowns Charlemagne emperor
910	Burgundian order of Cluny founded
998	First authenticated use of interdict
1059	College of Cardinals established

### Triumph of the Church

1073	Hildebrand becomes Pope Gregory VII
1077	Emperor Henry IV bows to Pope at Canossa
1095	Pope Urban II preaches need of Crusade
1098	St. Robert of Molesme founds Cistercian order
12th century	Sacraments limited to 7
12th and 13th centuries	Period of Crusades
1119	Premonstratensian order founded
1122	Concordat of Worms: Investiture struggle settled
1140	Gratian compiles the <i>Decretum</i>
1181?-1226	Franciscan order established
13th century	Inquisition officially created
1206	Dominican order founded
1208	Innocent III instigates crusade against Albigensians and Waldensians
1214	Battle of Bouvines: Victory of Pope Innocent III
	Zenith of power of medieval Church

## CHAPTER 13

### *Bishop, Priest, and Monk*



THE Middle Ages have been called the Age of Faith. Nevertheless there were many conflicts of authority and many religious heresies. The fundamental difference between that time and ours is one of perspective. Today science and the affairs of the world in which we live tend to monopolize our attention. In the Middle Ages people were concerned mainly with religion and the life of the world-to-come. Again—and this is important to appreciate—we no longer possess the unity of intellectual purpose which the Middle Ages knew. We now have outstanding thinkers interested in scientific discoveries and outstanding thinkers interested in religious and philosophical problems, and very often there is a definite conflict of opinion and purpose between such men. In the Middle Ages such a situation was virtually impossible. The greatest thinkers were enlisted on the side of the Church. Even as brilliant a scientist as Roger Bacon believed that theology was the science of sciences and that his chief task was to increase its usefulness. It would be impossible today to find such an attitude among our best scientists. But the Middle Ages saw no conflict between the Church and learning. With relatively few exceptions, everyone believed that the Church was universal, that its powers were God-given, and that all human knowledge could be reconciled with its creed and dogmas.

We must also realize at the outset that Christianity in the Middle Ages was not a go-to-church-on-Sunday affair. It was extraordinarily vivid and real. We shall see that the sacraments and services of the Church were considered the most vital aspects of living, for they assured the participant of eternal salvation, and salvation was the goal of everyone. The sermons of the age abounded with vivid descriptions of hell, devils prod-



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ding or devouring howling, tortured sinners, and brimstone and smoke rising in clouds out of the seething pit. Descriptions of heaven were as vivid; salvation assured the happy soul of "a splendour that is sevenfold brighter and clearer than the sun." The Church guaranteed our ancestors this destination in return for an acceptance of its teachings. How could our forefathers fail to accept the teachings and the protection of the Church? During the Middle Ages almost every person in western Europe was automatically a member of one Church. He was born into it and he died in it, and membership, in return for an unswerving allegiance to the power and purpose of the Church, assured him the priceless gift of salvation.

It is now our purpose (1) to trace the genesis and growth of the Church as an all-powerful universal organization, (2) to examine the methods by which the Church obtained such complete mastery over the spiritual and secular lives of all Christians, (3) to witness the triumph of the Church as the most powerful temporal institution in medieval Europe, together with its gradual decline, and (4) to appreciate the multitude of ways in which medieval life centered about the universal Church.

### *How the Church Came to Be Universal*

**Aspects of Christianity.** In Chapter 7 we saw how the Christian religion triumphed throughout the western world, evolving slowly and tortuously from a despised and hunted sect to the state religion of the Roman empire. When we examine medieval Christianity, we should think of it in three distinct aspects: (1) as a religion only, the personal faith in a divine Saviour and the desire to enter into conscious affinity with God, (2) as a Church, an organization, an ecclesiastical system, an actual government based on definite political and religious beliefs, and (3) as theology, an attempt to fit the teachings of Christ into a logical system of beliefs. Without a complex church organization and a definite theology, Christianity as a simple religion could never have endured the chaos and conflict of the centuries immediately following the decline of the Roman empire.

**The organization of the Church.** The medieval Church was to be found in every hamlet; its influence was felt by every inhabitant. To maintain its universality and power, the Church had a highly organized administrative system. The strength of the Church in the Middle Ages was in large measure the result of its strong personal link with every man, woman, and child under its jurisdiction. This link was forged in the parish, the smallest area of jurisdiction of the Church.

**The laity.** The largest single group within the medieval Church was the lay population. Every child of Christian parents was automatically born into the Church, just as today he is born into a nation. The Church was official and public, and therefore all the people contributed to its upkeep by taxes. Each person was subject to both its religious and its secular authority, for it was binding upon every ruler to enforce obedience to the one Holy Apostolic Universal Church. Thus the Catholic Church was an all-embracing institution, resting on divine foundation and authority, buttressed by secular powers, and including almost the entire population of western and central Europe.

**The parish priest.** If we were to walk down the single street of a manorial village, we could not help noticing the parish church at the end of it. The priest's house, close to the church, would be little larger or better constructed than the average serf's cottage. A few weeks' observation would soon make us realize that the parish priest was the most important single character in the manor (often identical with the parish in area), not by reason of rank or social prestige, but because of the service he rendered to the common man.

The priest was generally of humble birth, with little education. Nevertheless he won the respect of his parishioners by the faithful per-

formance of his many duties. He administered the sacraments, had an eye for the moral behavior of his flock, and helped the sick. He was father-confessor, social worker, policeman, and recreational director, all rolled into one. After Sunday service, he often organized games on the village green or judged archery contests. He sometimes felt called upon to threaten with the pains of purgatory a husband who had become known as a wife beater. On occasion he censured a nagging wife whose rasping tongue was sending her husband too frequently to the tavern. Some of the parish priests saw many years of service in the same parish and were loved by their flock as friend and counselor. The ambitious young serf could whisper into the sympathetic ear of the priest his plans to run away to a nearby town to escape from serfdom, or a lovesick lad might unburden his heart and seek advice from the priest as to how he might gain the favor of his sweetheart.

Though some of the parish clergy were guilty of keeping concubines, drinking and gambling, and even selling the sacraments for money, the majority were a credit to their Church. Chaucer's most sympathetic character sketch pertains to the "poure" parson.

Wide was his parish, houses far asunder,  
But never did he fail, for rain or thunder,  
In sickness, or in sin, or any state,  
To visit to the farthest, small and great,  
Going afoot, and in his hand a stave.  
This fine example to his flock he gave,  
That first he wrought and afterwards he taught;

There is nowhere a better priest, I trow.  
He had no thirst for pomp or reverence,  
Nor made himself a special, spiced conscience,  
But Christ's own lore, and His apostles' twelve  
He taught, but first he followed it himself.<sup>1</sup>

*The bishop.* Leaving the manor with its busy priest, we might then proceed to the nearby town, in which lived the bishop. This official was responsible for the administration of a diocese, a church unit made up of many parishes. A bishop was indeed an exalted person. He was, in fact, a prince of the Church. In the early days, when the church organization was forming, there came to be established in the larger cities the authority of the bishop, consisting of administrative control in reli-

gious matters over the area known as the diocese. During the fourth and fifth centuries these bishops were granted judicial power in civil as well as ecclesiastical matters, and in time they displaced the Roman governors in importance. Throughout the Middle Ages the ranks of the bishops were largely recruited from the European aristocracy. The bishops thus tended to side with the conservative nobles, since they were in the same social class. These church men even maintained elaborate retinues befitting their high position.

The bishops were great landowners. They held large tracts of land under feudal tenure. This meant, of course, that in addition to his religious duties the average bishop had to carry out the normal activities of a feudal vassal. These activities included liability for military service, and a few churchmen actually fell in battle fighting for their lords. By possessing land, the bishop was part of the secular machinery of the state. As part of the feudal system he was expected to have a lord, possess vassals of his own, and be true to his lord. On the other hand, he was a member of the Church, an organization that demanded his full loyalty. The Middle Ages seemed to forget the New Testament writ that "no man can serve two masters." The conflict of loyalties caused much bitterness between the lay lords and the Church. In the ordinary routine of the feudal system, when a lord died, his heir automatically succeeded to his fief, but a bishop or other churchman holding feudal land had no legal heir, and a new selection was therefore necessary. The chief problem in connection with the selection of this successor was the identity of the person making it, the lay lord or some authority such as the Pope.

Although the bishop did not come into intimate contact with the common people as did his parish priests, he was nevertheless a very busy man. His days were occupied with ordaining priests, visiting abbeys, dedicating new churches, and administering discipline to wayward priests. Towering above the city in which the bishop lived was his church, the cathedral. These great edifices of Romanesque or Gothic architecture were the most imposing buildings in medieval Europe. Not far from the cathedral was the court of the bishop, where canon law, the law of the Church, was enforced. Most cases tried here concerned charges of heresy, misconduct of priests, adultery, and matters

ding or devouring howling, tortured sinners, and brimstone and smoke rising in clouds out of the seething pit. Descriptions of heaven were as vivid; salvation assured the happy soul of "a splendour that is sevenfold brighter and clearer than the sun." The Church guaranteed our ancestors this destination in return for an acceptance of its teachings. How could our forefathers fail to accept the teachings and the protection of the Church? During the Middle Ages almost every person in western Europe was automatically a member of one Church. He was born into it and he died in it, and membership, in return for an unswerving allegiance to the power and purpose of the Church, assured him the priceless gift of salvation.

It is now our purpose (1) to trace the genesis and growth of the Church as an all-powerful universal organization, (2) to examine the methods by which the Church obtained such complete mastery over the spiritual and secular lives of all Christians, (3) to witness the triumph of the Church as the most powerful temporal institution in medieval Europe, together with its gradual decline, and (4) to appreciate the multitude of ways in which medieval life centered about the universal Church.

### *How the Church Came to Be Universal*

**Aspects of Christianity.** In Chapter 7 we saw how the Christian religion triumphed throughout the western world, evolving slowly and tortuously from a despised and hunted sect to the state religion of the Roman empire. When we examine medieval Christianity, we should think of it in three distinct aspects: (1) as a religion only, the personal faith in a divine Saviour and the desire to enter into conscious affinity with God, (2) as a Church, an organization, an ecclesiastical system, an actual government based on definite political and religious beliefs, and (3) as theology, an attempt to fit the teachings of Christ into a logical system of beliefs. Without a complex church organization and a definite theology, Christianity as a simple religion could never have endured the chaos and conflict of the centuries immediately following the decline of the Roman empire.

**The organization of the Church.** The medieval Church was to be found in every hamlet; its influence was felt by every inhabitant. To maintain its universality and power, the Church had a highly organized administrative system. The strength of the Church in the Middle Ages was in large measure the result of its strong personal link with every man, woman, and child under its jurisdiction. This link was forged in the parish, the smallest area of jurisdiction of the Church.

**The laity.** The largest single group within the medieval Church was the lay population. Every child of Christian parents was automatically born into the Church, just as today he is born into a nation. The Church was official and public, and therefore all the people contributed to its upkeep by taxes. Each person was subject to both its religious and its secular authority, for it was binding upon every ruler to enforce obedience to the one Holy Apostolic Universal Church. Thus the Catholic Church was an all-embracing institution, resting on divine foundation and authority, buttressed by secular powers, and including almost the entire population of western and central Europe.

**The parish priest.** If we were to walk down the single street of a manorial village, we could not help noticing the parish church at the end of it. The priest's house, close to the church, would be little larger or better constructed than the average serf's cottage. A few weeks' observation would soon make us realize that the parish priest was the most important single character in the manor (often identical with the parish in area), not by reason of rank or social prestige, but because of the service he rendered to the common man.

The priest was generally of humble birth, with little education. Nevertheless he won the respect of his parishioners by the faithful per-

formance of his many duties. He administered the sacraments, had an eye for the moral behavior of his flock, and helped the sick. He was father-confessor, social worker, policeman, and recreational director, all rolled into one. After Sunday service, he often organized games on the village green or judged archery contests. He sometimes felt called upon to threaten with the pains of purgatory a husband who had become known as a wife beater. On occasion he censured a nagging wife whose rasping tongue was sending her husband too frequently to the tavern. Some of the parish priests saw many years of service in the same parish and were loved by their flock as friend and counselor. The ambitious young serf could whisper into the sympathetic ear of the priest his plans to run away to a nearby town to escape from serfdom, or a lovesick lad might unburden his heart and seek advice from the priest as to how he might gain the favor of his sweetheart.

Though some of the parish clergy were guilty of keeping concubines, drinking and gambling, and even selling the sacraments for money, the majority were a credit to their Church. Chaucer's most sympathetic character sketch pertains to the "poure" parson.

Wide was his parish, houses far asunder,  
But never did he fail, for rain or thunder,  
In sickness, or in sin, or any state,  
To visit to the farthest, small and great,  
Going afoot, and in his hand a stave.  
This fine example to his flock he gave,  
That first he wrought and afterwards he  
taught;

. . . . .

There is nowhere a better priest, I trow.  
He had no thirst for pomp or reverence,  
Nor made himself a special, spiced conscience,  
But Christ's own lore, and His apostles' twelve  
He taught, but first he followed it himself.<sup>1</sup>

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pertaining to contracts, wills, and dowries. The bishop also had his cathedral school, the most important educational agency in medieval society until the rise of the universities.

**The archbishop.** Many miles away from the cathedral town of the bishop was the seat of the archbishop, who administered a province consisting of several bishoprics. In early times the bishops of the larger towns had naturally wielded greater powers than some of their brother bishops. Thus the bishops of these important centers came to have jurisdiction over whole provinces and were placed over each bishop whose diocese lay within their province. The archbishop often had a magnificent cathedral in keeping with his exalted rank. From time to time the king consulted him on important problems. The archbishop was supposed to call an annual provincial council so as to announce papal messages and decrees. In addition he had to consecrate bishops and preside over his court, where cases appealed from the bishop's court were reviewed.

**The Pope.** Above the archbishops was the supreme head of the Church—the Pope, or Bishop of Rome. Not until the fifth century, when Emperor Valentinian III ordered all bishops to give obedience to the Bishop of Rome, did the headship of the latter originate. But it was logical that the Bishop of Rome should be the Pope. Rome was the greatest city in the empire and had existed for centuries as capital of the Roman world. Perhaps of even greater importance was the famous Petrine theory. According to church teachings, the Apostle Peter was the first Bishop of Rome. Now the Lord had said:

"And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

"And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."<sup>2</sup>

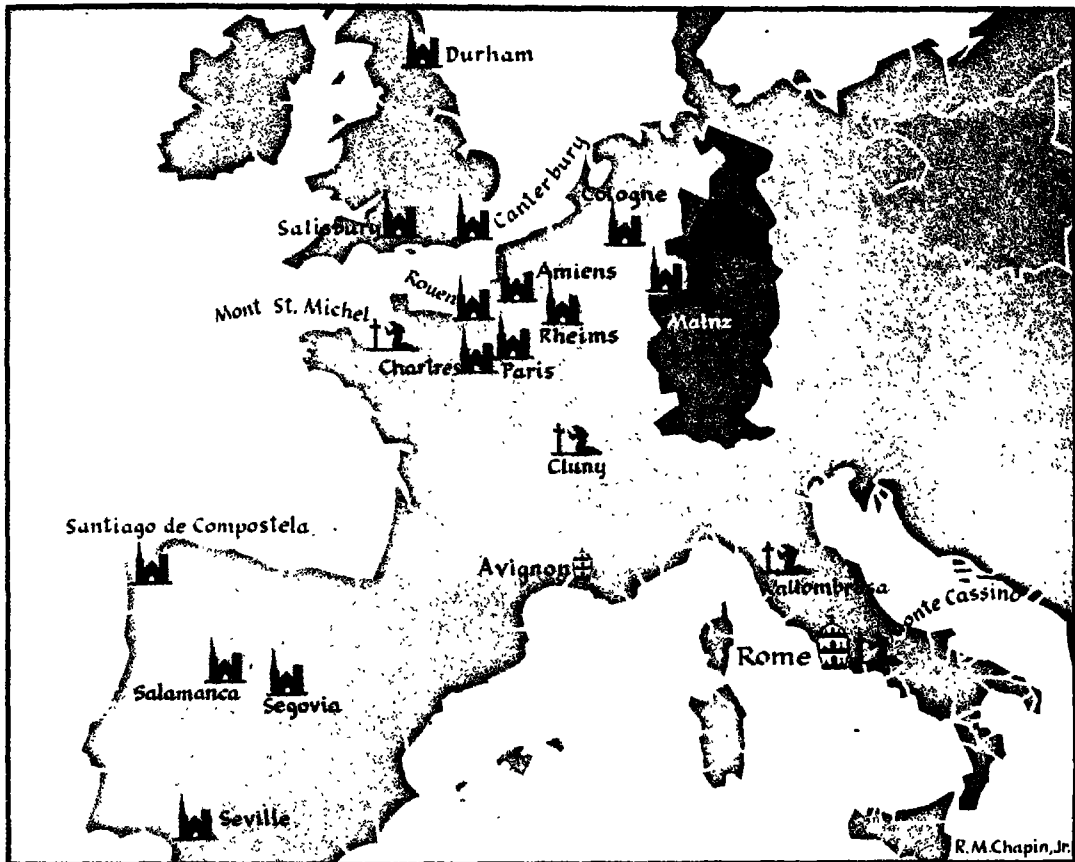
The Petrine theory maintained that all subsequent Bishops of Rome, as heirs to Peter (the first Bishop) also possessed this same power which the Lord had given to Peter.

Because of the size of the Church it was imperative that the Pope have a court, called the

*Curia*, to assist him. The leading churchmen of the *Curia* were called cardinals, who, sitting together as a College (the body created in 1059), elect the new Pope. By the thirteenth century the *Curia* had developed three important departments. The *Chancery* concerned itself with all judicial matters, including the preparation of papal bulls. (A bull is a solemn letter or promulgation of the Pope to which is always attached an official leaden seal, the *bullae*.) The *Penitentiary* wielded the Church's two great weapons for enforcing obedience, the interdict and excommunication. The third department was the *Camera* (chamber) whose duty it was to collect and disburse papal revenues.

When we reflect that the whole of Europe was divided into a number of great provinces, each administered by a powerful archbishop, we can picture the vast army of Christendom in which the authority of the Pope descended through cardinals, archbishops, bishops, and parish priests and through them was diffused throughout Europe. Political boundaries were no obstacle to the authority of the Church. Every man, whether he was born in England, France, or Italy, was expected to give his first loyalty to the international Church. Such was the Church—with its own courts, with thousands of official workers, and with rich sources of revenue. No wonder that when the kings began to try to increase their power and make their commands absolute within the confines of their countries a struggle was precipitated between the universal Church and the rising national monarchs.

**Early monasticism.** The clergy we have discussed so far, those who administered the Church's services and teachings among the laity, were known as the secular clergy. But another branch had developed outside the ranks of the ecclesiastical hierarchy. To many of the faithful, the Church's complex administrative powers and the growth of a rigid theology meant a serious departure from the simple teachings of the New Testament. As early as the third and fourth centuries the common charge was that the Church had become as worldly as the rich men whom Christ had condemned. Besides those who wanted simplicity in church matters, there were others who wanted to lead a life of contemplation away from the noise and temptations of the world. The individuals who did so became



*The Church as an all-embracing spiritual organization divided Europe into ecclesiastical provinces as shown on this map. A province was subdivided into dioceses, each administered by a bishop. The province of Mainz (darker area) is shown divided in this manner. The archbishop of Mainz had jurisdiction over all the bishops of the province and in addition administered the black area directly as bishop himself.*

known as ascetics and monks. The life of Christ in many ways fitted into such a pattern.

"Alone among all the great religious teachers of the world, He never was married. He was heralded by the Baptist hermit. He spent much of His time in lonely contemplation among the deserts. . . . He told a rich young man who wished to be perfect that he might go, sell everything he had and give to the poor. His teachings are full of exhortations that are admirably appropriate to monks and yet in some cases very hard sayings to those who live in the world."<sup>3</sup>

In the east, where it originated, asceticism took many extreme forms. In third-century Egypt the hermit, or anchorite, would abandon the world entirely, denouncing even beauty as evil, and in the midst of filth would

try to starve or torture himself into a state of holiness. In Syria the mania for self-torture took the strange form of dwelling on pillars. The most famous of the pillar saints was St. Simeon Stylites, who dwelt for thirty years on the top of a pillar sixty feet high, braving the utmost rigors of pain and inclement weather. St. Simeon attracted great crowds who came from far away to stare at him.

**Regular clergy.** However, such extreme asceticism brought about a reaction, and Christians in Egypt developed the monastic life, wherein men seeking a common spiritual goal lived together under a common set of regulations. These monks were known as the regular clergy, because they lived according to a rule (*regula*). St. Basil (about 329-379), a Greek from Asia Minor, is to be remembered for his





*Jean Mielot, secretary to Philip the Good, is copying a fine manuscript in his scriptorium. Producing such books as these sometimes required a lifetime of painstaking effort. Most medieval books were made by monks.*

splendid pioneering work in the organization of monastic life. He substituted hard labor, works of charity, and a communal life for the asceticism of the hermit. The *Rule* of St. Basil to this day remains the standard life in all the monasteries of the Eastern Church.

Monasticism spread westward to Italy from Egypt and was popular by the close of the fourth century. In the west organized monasticism rather than extreme asceticism won lasting approval. Religion in the Near and Far East has always been more introspective and, one might say, less practical than in the west. The famous organizer in the west was St. Benedict (about 480-543). About 520 he led a band of devoted followers to a hill named Monte Cassino, where they built a monastery. There Benedict composed a set of monastic rules whose effect upon subsequent religious life is incalculable.

**The Benedictine Rule.** In the Prologue to his *Rule* St. Benedict stated that he was found-

ing "a school for the Lord's service, in the organization of which we trust that we shall ordain nothing severe and nothing burdensome." He admitted that the rule might be at first "a trifle irksome," but its disciplinary measures would insure a proper monastic life and a good preparation for the way of salvation.

The novice desiring entrance to the monastic life had to take the vows of poverty and obedience to the abbot, the head of the monastery. Benedict assumed that as the monk had forever abandoned the life of the world he would remain true to the ideal of chastity. The daily routine of the brothers was carefully worked out in the Benedictine system. Divine worship was the chief duty to be performed, and to that end the monks were to take part in eight daily services or "offices," beginning with Matins "at the eighth hour of the night" (after sunset), followed by Lauds at daybreak, and closing with Complin at dusk.

Thus, something like eight hours of unbroken sleep was allowed to the conscientious performer.

Some excerpts from Benedict's *Rule* throw light on his monastic ideals. A monk "should have absolutely not anything; neither a book, nor tablets, nor a pen—nothing at all. For indeed it is not allowed to the monks to have their own bodies or wills in their power. . . . Indeed we read that wine is not suitable for monks at all. But because in our day it is not possible to persuade the monk of this, let us agree at least as to the fact that we should not drink till we are sated, but sparingly. . . . Idleness is the evening of the soul. And, therefore, at fixed hours, the brothers ought to be occupied in manual labor; and again at fixed times in sacred reading."<sup>4</sup>

The *Rule* also stressed the value of manual work, six or seven hours of daily labor being required. The daily fare was plain, consisting mainly of a vegetarian diet (except for invalids). The *Rule* insured a simple, virile, and useful life when properly carried out and enabled the monasteries to make innumerable contributions for centuries in the realms of agriculture, animal husbandry, architecture, and learning. The Church recognized the merits of Benedict's *Rule* by endorsing his system as the universal one, a model monastic pattern.

**Militant orders of monks.** Besides the monks who lived in fixed abodes, there were

two other main branches of monastic life. First of all, there were militant orders of monks who organized crusades, bore arms, and tended the holy places connected with the life of Christ. Among these were the Templars, the Hospitallers, and the Teutonic Knights. The latter order undertook to convert the heathen Slavs of eastern Europe and establish themselves as the military rulers of the Prussians.

**The begging friars.** The second group arose in the thirteenth century, largely as a protest against the growing worldliness and laxity of the medieval Church. The monks in this group were known as the begging friars, or mendicants, because they possessed no fixed abode but wandered through the countryside preaching to the people and depending upon alms for a living.

The two great orders of begging friars are the Franciscan, founded by St. Francis of Assisi (1181?-1226), friend of criminal and leper, and lover of "birds of the air" and "beasts of the field," and the Dominican, whose practical founder, St. Dominic, emphasized the value of preaching. Some of the most brilliant medieval scholars and Popes were members of these two humble orders, Roger Bacon being a Franciscan and St. Thomas Aquinas a Dominican. We shall say more about the two orders later in the chapter, when we discuss the subject of medieval reform.

## *The Church's Methods of Salvation*

**The purpose of the Church.** Up to this point we have seen how the Church came to be the only religious institution in western Europe and how it developed its complex and all-embracing administration. But for what purpose did it exist?

The Church was the agency of Christ. It alone could interpret and carry out the instructions of its founder. It alone possessed the means necessary for salvation. The individual was helpless and could not secure salvation without belonging to the Church. In a word, the Church was the essential intermediary between God and man.

The Middle Ages had as a primary objective the preparation for an afterlife. To die safely rather than to build up earthly treasures or gain fame was the goal of every true Christian.

According to the Church, salvation was achieved through the performance of certain ceremonies. These were found mainly in the sacramental system. The nature and process of salvation was expounded by an elaborate system of thought known as theology—the evaluation of man's relationship to God, together with the study of the reasons for man's existence. It should be noted that a unified system of theology scarcely took definite shape until the thirteenth century, when canon law, papal administration, and the works of such theologians as Peter Lombard, Albert the Great, and St. Thomas Aquinas established a fairly harmonious system of theology.

**Theology.** Salvation was the object of living, and therefore the main tenets of medieval theology center about the means of achiev-

ing salvation. Man had originally lived in a state of perfection. But Adam and Eve of their own free will fell from the perfect state and so lost Paradise. Furthermore, Adam bequeathed to his children the taint of original sin, and they bequeathed it in turn to their descendants. Thus all the human race was damned from the outset. Jesus, the Son of God, sacrificed Himself upon the cross at Calvary in order that He might atone for the sins of mankind, and through His sacrifice God again gave to man an opportunity to win eternal perfection. But—and this was paramount in the minds of every medieval person—salvation was won only by the grace of God, and salvation came only to the man who believed in redemption through the atonement made on the cross by Christ.

Each man, therefore, had to act if he were not to be damned forever. However, since he could perform no act worthy of salvation without divine grace, how was this to be earned? The theologians taught that God bestowed His grace on man by means of the Church and its officials, for (according to the Petrine theory) the successors of Peter held the very keys of salvation. The Church created definite ceremonies by which men secured grace. These ceremonies are known as sacraments, "the outward and visible signs of invisible grace."

*The sacraments.* By the twelfth century, these sacraments had been limited to seven, a number made official in the fifteenth century.

As Pope Eugene IV wrote in 1438: "There are seven sacraments under the new law: that is to say, baptism, confirmation, the mass, penance, extreme unction, ordination, and matrimony . . . these our sacraments both contain grace and confer it upon all who receive them worthily."<sup>5</sup>

In *baptism* the taint of original sin was washed away, and the person was given a Christian name (hence "christening"). *Confirmation* took place during the period of adolescence and was intended to strengthen the character of the youth during his formative years. *Penance* was designed to remove personal sins committed after baptism. Penance depended upon three elements. The first was contrition, which involved a turning away from sin and a sense of shame. The second was oral confession, in early times made publicly, but later made to a father confessor. The third element

was satisfaction, by which the penitent made restitution for his wrongs in any way which his confessor suggested, such as prayer, fasting, almsgiving, or pilgrimages. For those penalties imposed but not discharged before death, a stay in purgatory was necessary.

The most important sacrament was the *Holy Eucharist*, or Lord's Supper. In the Fourth Lateran Council of 1215, the full teaching of the Church regarding the Eucharist was set forth. The dogma of "the real presence of the incarnate Christ by the process of transubstantiation" was there affirmed. No proper appreciation of the ceremony of the Mass can possibly be obtained unless the significance of transubstantiation is understood. According to this doctrine, when the priest pronounces over the bread and wine the age-old words of Christ, "For this is My body. . . . For this is the chalice of My blood," a miracle takes place. To all outward appearances, the bread and wine appear unchanged, but in "substance" they have been transformed into the very body and blood of the Saviour. The laity used to receive both the wine and bread. However, the spilling of the wine—now become Christ's blood—led to the practice of the priest drinking the wine for them.

*Marriage* was sanctified by a sacrament. The Church preferred celibacy as an ideal, but without marriage there would soon be no Church at all. Marriage within certain degrees of family relationship was strictly forbidden.

*Extreme unction* was the sacrament administered at the time of death and was designed to give the Christian comfort as to his chances of salvation, by removing from him the remains of sin, except, of course, those unatoned for, requiring an interval in purgatory.

The seventh sacrament was that of *holy orders*, or the ordination into the priesthood. It was administered by the bishop and gave the priest virtues which made him distinct from secular men. The ordained priest was capable of making possible the miracle of transubstantiation as well as performing the other sacraments. Therefore the clergy (through the sacrament of ordination) became an integral part of the system which insured mankind's salvation.

*The religion of the common people.* The problems of theology attracted the attention primarily of the intellectuals. The majority of the people then, as today, accepted the beliefs,

of the world in which they lived without very much questioning. To the unlettered population, the following constituted the essentials of the Christian faith: (1) the Creation and Fall of Adam, (2) the birth and the crucifixion

of Christ, (3) the Last Judgment, (4) the horrors of hell, and (5) the eternal bliss of heaven. The sacramental system promised a safe entrance into heaven. Then why worry needlessly over fine points of theology?<sup>6</sup>

### *How the Church Enforced Its Teachings*

**The weapons of the Church.** The weapons the Church used to implement its teachings and commands were very effective indeed. The principal ones were (1) canon law, (2) excommunication, (3) interdict, and (4) command of vast revenues.

**Canon law.** Canon law had been developed from the Scriptures, the writings of the Church Fathers, the disciplinary and doctrinal rules made by church councils, and the decrees of the Popes. The collection of these canons resulted in many problems and contradictions. The *Digest* of Justinian's Code was found in the eleventh century, and thus Roman law was studied afresh. In the following century (1140) a monk named Gratian compiled his famous code *Concordia discordantium canonum* (harmony of conflicting canons), known generally as the *Decretum*. Ultimately, the Church issued its official body of canon law, known as the *corpus iuris canonici*. This represents the ecclesiastical counterpart to the Justinian Code, known as the *corpus iuris civilis*.

Canon law protected the clergy from laymen. Every man who had been admitted to the clerical state and could read and write enjoyed what is known as benefit of clergy. This meant that a churchman could be tried only in church courts according to canon law, in spite of the fact that he might have committed a serious crime against a layman. This practice led to serious abuses, for the clergy usually got off with lighter punishments in their own courts.

The Church used canon law to punish such crimes as perjury, blasphemy, sorcery, usury, which the medieval Church denounced, and heresy, the most horrible of all crimes in medieval eyes. A murder was a crime against a fellow man, but disbelief in the teachings of Christ or His Church was a crime against God Himself.

**The Inquisition.** In the thirteenth century, the Church devised an institution known as the Inquisition to cope with a rising tide of heresy and to bring religious conformity to Europe.

These heresies were certain schools of thought which questioned the basic doctrines of the Church or argued that salvation could be attained by methods different from those officially prescribed by the Church. The Inquisition was an elaborate system of inquiry into the beliefs of persons suspected of being heretics. People accused of heresy were tried in the court of the Inquisition. If an accused person confessed and abjured, or renounced, his heresy, he was "reconciled" with the Church on performance of penance. If he did not voluntarily confess, he could be subjected to torture, one of the most commonly used forms being the rack, which wrenched the limbs of the victim. If torture failed to make the prisoner confess, he was declared a heretic and turned over to the secular authorities (unless he abjured in the meantime) to be burned at the stake.

Few scholars have been able to look at the Inquisition objectively. Some have condemned it completely, while others have tended to minimize its errors. It must be kept in mind that Roman law had made use of torture and that Roman emperors often ordered condemned persons to be burned at the stake. Furthermore, to the medieval mind the soul was infinitely more important than the body. Therefore the torturing of a suspected heretic was justifiable if by confession his soul could be saved from certain hellfire. The great French scholar of the Inquisition, Jean Guiraud, has analyzed some 930 inquisitional sentences pronounced between 1308 and 1323. He found that 42 persons, or between four and five per cent of the cases, were sentenced to death; 139 persons (about eighteen per cent) were acquitted. The remainder were either imprisoned or assigned various penances.

**Excommunication.** But the Church generally made use not of outright physical punishments but of spiritual penalties. The most powerful of these was excommunication, which simply meant exclusion from the Church. If a man would not heed the commands of the Church, he was excommunicated.

It was a very serious penalty, for *extra ecclesiam nulla salus*—outside the Church there is no salvation. Excommunication might vary in its punishment. At its worst it banned the victim from all participation in the ritual of the Church, denied its spiritual help, forbade other Christians to associate with him or help him in any way, freed all his vassals from their oaths of fealty to him, and prevented his burial in consecrated soil. The attending ceremony added solemnity and terror to the punishment. On occasion the bishop appeared, attended by twelve priests, each holding a lighted candle. At the moment when the curse, or anathema, was declared, the candles were dashed to the ground to signify the extinction of the guilty one's soul.

Here are the concluding lines of a thirteenth-century Scottish excommunication directed against enemies of the Church.

"Accursed be all the forenamed persons; cursed be they without and within, from the sole of the foot even to the crown of the head. And may their part and companionship be with Dathan and Abiram whom the earth swallowed quick. May their days be few and their offices let others take; may their children be orphans; and as this light is at this moment extinguished, so may the lights of their lives be extinguished before the face of Him who liveth for ever and ever; and may their souls be plunged in hell unless they repent and amend their ways and make satisfaction. So be it! So be it! Amen! (The candles are extinguished, and a bell is rung.)"

**Interdict.** Excommunication was directed against single persons; interdict punished whole groups in localities. The interdict has been termed "an ecclesiastical lockout." In the country or territory thus penalized, no church services were held, and all sacraments save baptism, penance, and confirmation were withheld. The first authenticated case of the use of interdict is the one issued in 998 against France. The interdict was a most powerful weapon, one instrumental, as we shall see later, in bringing King John of England to

his knees and forcing him to give his entire kingdom to the Pope, getting it back as a fief.

Excommunication and interdict were used many times without justification and too often. Hence the later medieval church authorities found that the people were coming to believe less and less in their importance. But while they were feared and obeyed, the power of the medieval Church was universal. The degree of effectiveness of excommunication and interdict serves as a good barometer of the Church's position and importance.

**Church revenues.** The main revenues which the Church received were (1) donations, (2) tithes, (3) fees, and (4) feudal dues. For centuries kings and nobles were generous contributors to bishoprics and monasteries. The lands given to the Church were said to have fallen *in mortua manu*, or into the clutch of a dead hand (*mortmain*), because the Church kept perpetually all lands which were donated to her. Kings saw their wealth disappearing alarmingly from such bequests. Finally in England in the reign of Edward I the famous Statute of Mortmain was passed in an attempt to put an end to this loss of wealth.

The tithe, which means one tenth of a man's income, was the regular income of the priest. In the twelfth century Pope Alexander III extended the tithe until it was levied on forests, mills, and even the labor of artisans. The common people came to resent the levying of tithes very much, especially when the taxes went to clergymen who remained absent from their residences among the people.

Fees for the performance of religious services and for the administration of some of the sacraments were another source of wealth. Revenue also came from the payment of feudal dues by vassals to bishops and abbots who were feudal lords and from the payment of manorial dues by peasants to churchmen who possessed manors. We shall see later that the growing wealth of the Church, the greatest landowner in medieval Europe, brought about many abuses and a worldliness among the clergy which weakened the faith of the common people.

### *The Triumph of the Medieval Church*

**Two international institutions.** At the time when the feudal system was at its fullest strength, Europe believed in the supremacy of two universal institutions, the Holy Roman

Church and the Holy Roman Empire. The powers of the two were not clearly defined. The first was the chosen instrument of God in spiritual matters, the second His chosen

political organization. But the Church and the Empire both laid claims to the highest of rights, and neither could exercise full powers without involving the subjection of the other. A conflict between the two was therefore inevitable.

The greatest of the earlier Popes was the sixth-century Gregory I, who defended the Roman Church against the ambitious Greek empire, checked the advance of the Lombards, one of the German tribes that had invaded Italy, converted the Saxon kingdoms, and became virtual sovereign of Rome and its surrounding territory. From his time on, the church leaders organized their work among the Franks and Germans, until, with the coronation of Charlemagne at Rome in 800, the Church had added to its spiritual solidarity a compact political organization.

But Charlemagne's temporal powers constituted a threat to the supremacy of the Pope. There was a danger that the Pope of Rome would fall again under the domination of the emperor of the west, just as the patriarch of Constantinople had gradually fallen into a subservient position under the emperor of the east. However, even though a great empire claiming international power had been created, the Church, in theory, had the upper hand. Charlemagne had received his crown from the Pope, a ceremony which could be interpreted later to signify the supremacy of the Church over the empire. That interpretation lay at hand for the Popes to use as a weapon in any struggle with the empire.<sup>8</sup>

**Feudalization of the Church.** Although a showdown between emperors and Popes loomed only faintly on the historical horizon, a very real danger to the Church lay in its steadily growing feudalization. As the Church gradually became the greatest landlord in Europe, the feudal lords attempted to bring the Church under their domination. On every possible occasion kings had their younger sons and relatives made bishops and archbishops in order to keep the wealthy church lands in royal possession. Feudal lords tried to control church elections. Even the office of Pope was not free from feudal taint, for the emperors of the Holy Roman Empire, the Italian barons, and the nobility in Rome itself quarreled over papal elections.

The Church was saved from the dangers of feudalism, and the papacy was rescued from

becoming a political pawn by two important tenth- and eleventh-century events. These were (1) a great religious revival, and (2) the coming to the papal throne of Gregory VII and his powerful successors.

**The religious revival.** The religious revival, which began in the tenth century, affected all classes. Among the factors contributing to its force were a realization on the part of officials in the Church that many of the clergy were not fulfilling their duties and a desire to free the church from control by feudal lords. As for the common people, several serious plagues and famines turned them toward religion as a bulwark against death and suffering. The revival took the following forms: In the first place, it resulted in a widespread building of cathedrals throughout Europe. With the construction of churches as community enterprises, Europe for awhile "snowed churches." Secondly, many new monastic orders were founded, including the order of Vallombrosa and the Burgundian order of Cluny. The last, begun at the monastery of Cluny in 910, had the following four policies: (1) to free the papal office from lay control, (2) to enforce clerical celibacy, (3) to establish absolute authority of the Pope over all members of the clerical order, and (4) to abolish simony and lay investiture.<sup>9</sup> The Cluniac movement was made a part of papal policy—now directed by able and aggressive Popes—and hence was very important to the rising power of the Church. A third form of the religious revival was the attempt of the Church to limit feudal warfare and "humanize" conflict. We saw previously how the Church limited the evils of warfare through the Peace of God and Truce of God. The fourth aspect of the religious revival, the crusades, which were started at the close of the eleventh century, not only gave the Church a chance to direct the weapons of the nobles away from its own possessions but also furnished a popular outlet for the great religious zeal of the day.

**Gregory VII.** The second great force of the eleventh century which brought the power of the papacy to an unknown height was Gregory VII. That famous pontiff, born Hildebrand about 1025, had spent his career in papal service and was so well known that, when his predecessor died in 1073, the Roman populace tumultuously shouted for Hildebrand and forcibly placed him on the papal throne.

Of low stature, short-legged, corpulent, of dull complexion, and inclined to stammer, Gregory VII possessed little learning but much zeal and honesty. His magnetic power over men, moreover, was extraordinary. One fanatical follower called him his "holy Satan." Completely convinced of the rightness of the Cluniac policies and seeing all about him kings and princes leading corrupt and unchristian lives, Gregory took as his ideal the establishment of a theocracy—the creation of a world government under the control of God's regent on earth, the Pope.

The pontiff once wrote: "Human pride has created the power of kings; God's mercy has created the power of bishops. The Pope is the master of Emperors. He is rendered holy by the merits of his predecessor, St. Peter. The Roman Church has never erred, and Holy Scripture proves it can never err. To resist it is to resist God."<sup>10</sup>

**Gregory's program.** For the next twelve years until his death in 1085 Gregory VII devoted his energies to breaking all such "resistance." The task before him was enormous, yet never once did he shrink from it. Gregory took the platform of the Cluniac reformers as his own. A step had been taken in the direction of freeing papal elections in 1059 by the creation of the College of Cardinals to elect the Pope, a duty which the College still performs.

In the later Roman empire the higher clergy had been forbidden to marry. However, the rule had not been strictly kept, and in the tenth and eleventh centuries there were many married priests in England, northern Italy, Germany, and elsewhere. The same synod which created the College of Cardinals in 1059 also declared illegal the marriage of the clergy, and Gregory had this decree made effective. The position of the Church on the much debated point of celibacy can be easily understood. Single priests could be easily transferred from country to country, a process necessary for the functioning of an international institution. Secondly, there was always the temptation for married clergy to alienate church property for the benefit of their children. Thirdly, marriage might distract men from giving full thought and loyalty to their religious duties. Lastly, the medieval mind looked upon celibate life as more spiritual and more in keeping with the personal life of Christ.

The third matter which Gregory undertook to solve, by far the most difficult of all, was the suppression of simony and lay investiture. Selling ecclesiastical offices to the highest bidder or acquiring them by bribery was known as simony (from Simon the magician, who tried to buy the gift of the Holy Spirit from the apostles). Gregory now gave simony an even broader interpretation to make it include all appointments to important church offices made by laymen, even those made by kings and the emperor of the Holy Roman Empire.

The new interpretation involved the problem of lay investiture, the power exercised by kings and feudal lords of "investing" the new incumbent of a bishopric or abbey with his religious office and his fiefs. Many of the church lands had been granted by the kings and nobles to the higher clergy, who became their vassals. The new bishop or abbot had to do them homage for his fief and received from them his ring and staff, the symbols of his religious functions. Furthermore, the nobility were given control over church property during the vacancy between the death of one incumbent and the selection of his successor, which meant that powerful laymen had an important stake in the election to church offices. The feudal lord not only invested the churchman, but also let it be known whom he wanted elected. This practice was particularly obnoxious to a Pope like Gregory, who believed that a lord guilty of bloodshed should never have the right to bestow the spiritual symbols upon the successors of the Apostle Peter, and that lay investiture weakened the temporal authority of the papacy.

**The investiture struggle between Empire and papacy.** Gregory decided, therefore, to exercise full power in stamping out the practices of simony and lay investiture. In the synod of 1075 he formally deposed all ecclesiastics who had received their investitures from a lay person. Such a drastic act was the same as a declaration of war against the kings of Europe. As the emperor of the Holy Roman Empire was the most powerful monarch, claiming sovereignty over all Christendom in political matters, Gregory first waged war with him, knowing that if he should win a victory against the most powerful of kings his triumph everywhere was assured.

The climax to the famous lay investiture struggle between the papacy and the Empire

occurred in the clash involving Pope Gregory VII and the emperor Henry IV. The high lights of this dramatic conflict are very interesting. Gregory accused Henry of simony and immorality and of having appointed the archbishop of Milan, and summoned him to Rome to answer for his conduct. Henry answered by summoning a synod of German clergy in 1076, where he deposed the Pope! "Henry, king not by usurpation but by God's ordinance, to Hildebrand, no longer Pope, but false monk. . . . I, Henry, king by the grace of God, with all of my bishops, say unto thee, 'Come down, come down!'"<sup>11</sup> Gregory excommunicated Henry and deposed him in turn, absolving all his subjects from their oaths of allegiance.

Henry, driven at last by baronial revolt to make his peace with the pontiff, finally appeared before Gregory at Canossa, a castle in the Apennines. Here one of the most dramatic scenes in history was enacted. It was January, 1077. Henry, the temporal ruler of all the Holy Roman Empire, appeared in the forecourt of the castle, dressed in the garb of a penitent, standing barefoot in the snow. Three days he begged for forgiveness until (in the words of Gregory) "finally, won by the persistency of his suit and by the constant supplications of all who were present, we loosed the chain of the anathema and at length received him into the favor of communion and into the lap of the Holy Mother Church."

But while the humiliation of the emperor and the triumph of the Pope were spectacular, contemporary accounts of the incident did not attach much significance to it. Soon after Canossa the struggle between the empire and the papacy broke out again, and before many years Gregory died in exile (1085), his last words (according to one report) being, "I have loved justice and hated iniquity; therefore I die in exile."<sup>12</sup>

Although Gregory's greatest success lay in the imposition of celibacy among the clergy, his other struggles and the masterful manner with which he directed his campaigns tended to increase the power and prestige of the papacy.

The problem of lay investiture was settled in 1122 by the compromise known as the Concordat of Worms. The Church gained the right to choose the man for office. The candidate received the lay investiture as a political

and feudal officer from the king and the spiritual investiture as an ecclesiastical officer and pastor, from the Church. After this time the problem of lay investiture never again became so acute.

*Frederick Barbarossa's Italian ambitions.* Despite this settlement the struggle for supremacy between the Empire and the papacy continued unabated for another century, because the contest between them was still undecided and because the Popes resented the emperors who came down from Germany into Italy to interfere in local politics. In 1152 Frederick I (Barbarossa) of the brilliant Hohenstaufen family came to power with the full intention of recovering his dominions and gaining a firmer hold on them. With this purpose Frederick crossed the Alps from his German kingdom, to bring the prosperous and powerful cities in northern Italy into conformity with his will. But by 1166 they were united in the Lombard League, a coalition determined to maintain its independence and commercial power. Frederick was defeated in 1176 by the League, which received valuable support from the Pope.

It soon became obvious that Italy was not to be united under any single political power. At the same time the failure of the emperor in Italy so weakened his strength in Germany that even there the hope of a strong, centralized government began to diminish rapidly in the thirteenth century. Not until the nineteenth century were the German and Italian states consolidated into nations.

Frederick I married his son Henry VI to Constance, the heiress of the Norman kingdom, which included Sicily and southern Italy. Once more the papacy saw itself threatened by imperial ambitions in Italy, for Henry VI, in his brief reign, formed the plan of consolidating Germany, Italy, and Sicily into a single hereditary rather than an elective monarchy.

*Frederick II.* This plan failed to materialize, for Henry died in 1197, leaving his possessions to his three-year-old son Frederick. The boy was brought up as the ward of that most powerful of medieval popes, Innocent III, who himself had been elected pope in 1198. The Empire fell on evil ways during the minority of Frederick, for rebellious groups wrought chaos and confusion. In 1211 Frederick was crowned as the German king; in



1220 he was crowned emperor of the Holy Roman Empire. In Innocent's time this ruler appeared to be in full agreement with the papacy's aims and promised to undertake a crusade. But Frederick was probably the most extraordinary monarch of the Middle Ages: a many-sided genius with strong plans as to the political role he should assume. Frederick did not quarrel with Innocent III (1161?-1216), but a fierce struggle broke out with later Popes. The emperor wanted powers co-equal with those of the Pope, but the latter demanded submission.

The two universal forces fought for supremacy throughout Frederick's reign. Because of their conflicting aims in Italy and Frederick's success in his crusade (wherein he did no fighting but won splendid concessions for Christians from his friend the Mohammedan sultan of Egypt), Pope Gregory IX excommunicated

him twice, tried to depose him, and called him "this scorpion spewing poison from the sting of his tail."<sup>13</sup>

Gregory further branded Frederick a heretic and blasphemer who dared to utter that mankind had been deceived by three liars, Christ, Moses, and Mohammed, and wound up his papal condemnation with the charge, "And Frederick maintains that no man should believe aught but what may be proved by the power and reason of nature."<sup>14</sup>

After Frederick's death in 1250, the empire never regained its power, though it lingered on into early modern times. In the sixteenth century under the emperor Charles V it reached again a short period of apparent power, but the advance of national states steadily reduced it to impotence until Napoleon I of France finally extinguished it in 1806.

### *The Crusades*

**The Popes and the crusades.** The Popes led the way in organizing one of the best-known movements of the Middle Ages, the crusades. These crusades were pilgrimages whose object was usually the recovery of the Holy Land from the infidel. The word "crusade" is derived from "taking the cross," after the example of Christ, a practice started by the participants in the First Crusade. On the way to the Holy Land the crusader wore a cross of cloth upon his breast. On the journey home he wore the cross on his back. Those who went to these wars were granted extensive indulgences by the Popes and were assured that their previous obligations for penance would be remitted.

**Reasons for the crusades.** After the death of Mohammed in 632, the Moslem faith had spread along the north coast of Africa and up the eastern and western fringes of the Mediterranean world. The crusades (1096-1291) were Christendom's answer to the threat of Mohammedan expansion. The original Mohammedan advance in the Near East had embraced all the provinces of the eastern empire in Asia and Africa except Asia Minor. However, the Mohammedan governors had been enlightened rulers and had allowed Christians to visit their holy shrines. But in the tenth and eleventh centuries the Seljuk Turks, recent converts to Mohammedanism and capturers of

the caliphate at Bagdad, came plundering and sweeping westward out of Asia. They sought Constantinople as their goal and in 1071 defeated the eastern emperor at the battle of Manzikert (see page 219). So near did they get to within striking distance of Constantinople that in 1095 the Byzantines appealed to Pope Urban II for assistance.

Meanwhile the Seljuks had captured Jerusalem from their fellow Mohammedans in 1071, and the fanatical Turks mistreated the Christian pilgrims. When accounts of the mistreatment reached Europe, men's minds became inflamed. In 1095 at the Council of Clermont Pope Urban II preached the need of the first great crusade to rescue both the eastern empire and the Holy Land. In masterful fashion Urban besought the gathering to take up the cross and to strive valiantly for a cause that promised not merely spiritual reward but even physical gain when the Christians should possess the Holy Land that "flowed with milk and honey." At the end of his appealing oration the crowd shouted, "It is the will of God"—the expression which the crusaders later used in battle.

The impetus back of the crusades was undoubtedly religious. There was a real and spontaneous outpouring of religious enthusiasm following Pope Urban's appeal. The devout Christian believed that one crusade

would cancel all his sins. The papacy also was of the opinion that the stimulation of religious enthusiasm following in the wake of the crusades would strengthen the power of the papacy.

Nevertheless there were other motives behind the crusades. Nobles saw an opportunity to fight and perhaps to obtain some valuable lands in Syria. The merchants in the Italian city-states were quite happy to support the crusades, since they would create a demand for Italian ships to carry the crusaders and their supplies to the Holy Land. The crusades, therefore, offered an opportunity for profit. Some of the crusaders were little more than riffraff. There were thieves trying to escape justice, debtors who could not meet their creditors, and outright ruffians and cutthroats. Like many historical movements the crusades were compounded of undiluted idealism, enlightened self-interest, and downright skulduggery.

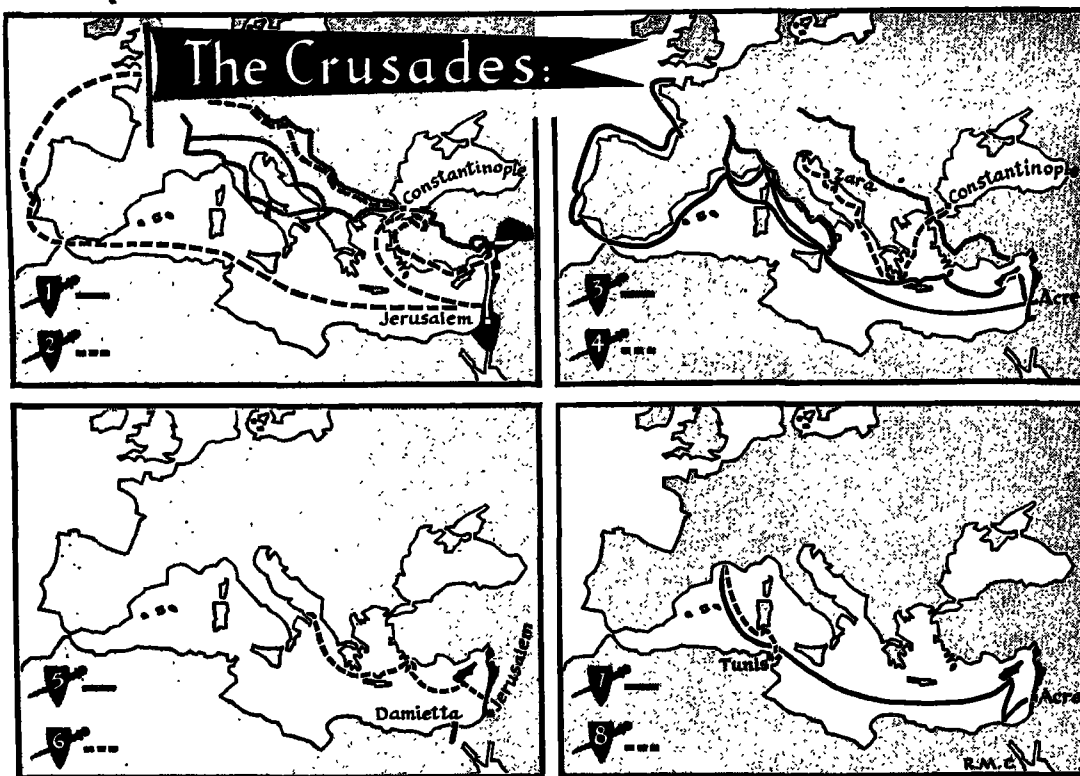
*The crusades.* From the end of the eleventh century to the end of the thirteenth there were eight distinct crusades as well as other movements of people who went to the Holy Land to try a hand against the Saracen

from time to time. The First Crusade, led principally by princes and nobles from Normandy, Toulouse, parts of Germany, and southern Italy, proceeded overland to Constantinople, forced its way through Asia Minor, and succeeded in capturing Jerusalem in 1099. Mingled with the sincere and simple-minded knights in the First Crusade were shrewd Norman adventurers and profiteering merchants and shipowners of Genoa and Pisa. The crusades are full of paradoxes. Even as the cynical and heretical emperor Frederick II was more successful in his crusade than the saintly King Louis, so the materialistic and bargain-hunting Italian merchants achieved more lasting benefits than the devout pilgrims who had been willing to give their lives that the Sepulchre might be rescued from the infidel.

*The First Crusade.* The First Crusade conquered lands in Syria and Asia Minor and created the feudal Latin kingdom of Jerusalem, which lasted from 1099 to 1187. Yet surprisingly enough, the western culture thus introduced had little or no effect upon the Near East, because the crusaders from western Europe were encountering a people culturally



*Krak-de-Chevaliers, a vast fortress high in the Syrian hills, dates from the crusades, when it was the outpost of the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem. It is similar to French castles of the period and is one of the few vestiges of the European feudal kingdoms. The French government helped in its restoration.*



superior to them. As we noted in our discussion of the rise of the town in Chapter 12 (page 326), a most important effect of the crusades was the diffusion of Mohammedan commerce throughout Europe.

**The Second Crusade.** When the kingdom of Jerusalem found itself in danger in 1144, Bernard of Clairvaux preached a Second Crusade, and Louis VII of France and the emperor Conrad III joined forces. They met with many misfortunes in getting to the Near East, and the Second Crusade ended when they failed to capture Damascus.

**The "Crusade of Kings."** The Third Crusade (1189) took place because of the attempts of the brilliant Saladin to end Christian rule in Syria. The "Crusade of Kings" was the answer to Saladin's challenge. The three leading monarchs of Europe, Frederick Barbarossa of the Empire, Richard I of England, and Philip Augustus of France set forth on their holy mission. Frederick was drowned, and after a quarrel with Richard, Philip went home before hostilities were concluded. After Richard and Saladin fought, they agreed to a three-year truce by which Christians were given control

of a small strip of coast and pilgrims were allowed to visit Jerusalem. The truce scarcely compensated for the cost of such an expensive crusade.

**The Fourth Crusade.** The Fourth Crusade is an example of the degradation of a great religious ideal. When Innocent III first issued a call in 1198 for a crusade, no great response was forthcoming. However, some nobles proceeded to Venice, there to take ships to Egypt to make war against the Moslem power. But the Venetian merchants were out to make money. They charged the knights outrageous sums for shipping their retinues, and since the crusaders could not pay the bill, the Venetians persuaded them to pay off the sum by capturing the Christian town of Zara, which had long proved troublesome to Venetian trading interests. Despite excommunication by the Pope, the merchants of Venice now proposed that these Egypt-bound crusaders should attack Constantinople. Although this proposition was really criminal, because the First Crusade had been designed, among other reasons, to preserve the independence of the eastern empire and Eastern Church, the Venetians

wanted to wrest the rich trade from the troubled Byzantine empire. In 1204 the city was captured and looted. Soldiers smashed the sacred altar of Saint Sophia to steal the precious stones, and even led in mules and horses to carry away the booty. Illiterate crusaders destroyed priceless Greek manuscripts and other works of art. The Fourth Crusade, despite the infamy of the expedition, transferred the center of Mediterranean trade from the Near East to Venice and thence to western Europe.

**Later crusades.** The thirteenth century saw other crusades, including the ill-fated Children's Crusade in 1212, in which thousands of youngsters were tricked and sold into slavery by Marseilles merchants. The Fifth Crusade captured Damietta in Egypt in 1219, only to lose it soon and fail altogether. The Sixth Crusade in 1228, organized by Frederick II, differed from previous attempts in that it involved no slaughter, pillage, or robbery.

Through Frederick's negotiating skill and tolerance it gained privileges for Christian pilgrims far superior to any gained previously. The Seventh Crusade was begun by King Louis IX some time after the fall of Jerusalem in 1244, but despite the zeal and devotion of the leader it proved a fiasco from beginning to end. In 1270 Saint Louis attempted a crusade to Tunis but died at Carthage. Then, in swift succession, the feudal states created by the crusaders in the Near East were captured by the Turks, and in 1291 Acre, the last stronghold of the Christians, fell.

Thus two centuries of struggle on the part of the crusaders to keep the infidel out of the Holy Land ended in dismal failure. However, the crusading spirit was by no means destined to die. In Spain the small Christian states ejected the Moors, and in eastern Europe Christians zealously held back the high tide of Mohammedan invasion in the sixteenth century.



*A medieval army attacks a fortified town held by Turks in Africa. Heraldic devices (lion, fleur-de-lis) indicate that several armies have encamped together for the siege. The cannons are a new element, supplementing the crossbows. The artist has depicted a typical medieval walled city.*

*Effects of the crusades on the Church.* The cultural results of the crusades will be taken up in a later chapter. At this point let us note their effect on the Church. Outwardly, these great movements at first tended to enhance the prestige of the papacy, especially the first three crusades prior to the pontificate of Innocent III. But the remainder showed all too

clearly the mercenary motives of many of the Italian merchants, the European nobles, and some of the Popes. During the thirteenth century the clergy were made to pay a tithe to help the crusades which the papacy often used for their own aims. Moreover, the Popes had begun to make increasing use of the expeditions for their own political interests.

## *Medieval Reform*

*Agencies for reform.* By the thirteenth century so many evils were apparent in the Church that determined efforts were made to eliminate them. New monastic orders arose to rout Church abuses, and the mendicant orders of Franciscans and Dominicans were founded to bring men back to the truths of Christ and to stamp out heresy.

*New monastic orders.* New monastic orders were springing up throughout Europe, of both the hermit and the communal type. The most impressive of the former was the Carthusian order, famed for its severe simplicity of life. Another order, known as the Augustinian canons, was designed to remove the laxity in cathedral chapters by making the canons live under a regular discipline. Still another order was the Premonstratensian, founded in 1119. These orders were an answer to the increasing laxity of the older Benedictine groups and even of the reforming Cluniac order. Practically all European monastic orders were based on the precepts of the Benedictine rule. The order of Cluny had been founded to make other orders realize that they had turned away from the ideas of St. Benedict. But the Cluniac order itself began to be lax, and a new order, the Cistercian, came into existence to sound the note of reform. With the rise of the Cistercians, founded in 1098 by St. Robert of Molesme, the second and last movement of Benedictine reform took place. Yet even the Cistercians fell from their founder's high moral purpose. The truth was that monasticism was no longer a practical ideal. Monasticism was based on an agricultural society and a love of solitude; hence it could not cope with the growing secularism and the rise of heresy in the towns. New techniques had to be found to enforce the Church's teachings.

*The growth of heresy.* Heresy has been defined by the Church as "obstinate adherence to opinions arbitrarily chosen in defiance of

accepted ecclesiastical teaching and interpretation." It appeared in the towns because the Church did not answer the problems of the new critical urban mind, and because the exchange of goods between towns also meant an exchange of ideas not always orthodox.

Pierre Abélard, one of the most brilliant intellects of the Middle Ages and a very famous teacher at the schools of Paris, had been persecuted as a heretic, although he was only guilty of possessing an inquiring mind. His pupil Arnold of Brescia lost his life for advocating a return of the Church to simplicity and a reform of the corrupted clergy and cardinals. The two major heretical sects were the Cathari, or Albigensians, in southern France and the Waldensians of Lyons. These sects were generally made up of simple, well-meaning people who sought to return to the life of Christ.

*The Albigensians and the Waldensians.* The Cathari (The Pure), or Albigensians, believed that this world is the battleground of two opposing forces, Good and Evil. The Albigensians held that Good is represented by Jesus and the teachings of the New Testament. They were utterly heretical, however, in maintaining that Jehovah as represented in the Old Testament was the embodiment of Evil, and their heresy went even further. This world of matter was inherently evil; therefore possessions and the Church with its great organization were likewise evil. So was marriage, for it perpetuated the human species in this sinful world.

The Cathari had a theory of salvation. By utter purity of living, such as strict vegetarianism and chastity, one could attain to the spiritual life. Because few men could live so severe an existence, the Cathari divided their ranks into two groups. The Perfect followed this rigid discipline and so were assured of salvation. The Believers could live quite nor-

mal lives otherwise, although they, too, repudiated the Church. Before death, however, they received the *consolamentum*, a sacrament of consolation that ushered them into the ranks of the Perfect. The Cathari were earnest people, but their views were in large measure anti-social. For this reason they were punished by the secular authorities as well as by the Church.

The Waldensians, while just as sincere as the Cathari, possessed none of the latter's dualistic views. The Waldensians derived their name from Peter Waldo, a merchant of Lyons who gave up his possessions in 1173 and founded a lay order called the Poor Men of Lyons. The principal complaint of the Waldensians was directed against the wealth and worldliness of the Church. Their heresy came from their repudiation of the efficacy of the sacraments when not administered by holy priests. As Jean Guiraud has summed it up:

"The Waldensians wanted above all to return to evangelical poverty, and they condemned everything in the Church which departed from this, the wealth of the clergy, their princedoms, and their temporal authority. In the ecclesiastical hierarchy they found no longer any sanctifying force; sanctity was in their eyes individual and could be acquired, not by sacraments or by ritual practices, but by personal work."<sup>15</sup>

Because the Waldensians maintained their views steadfastly and said that God would hear a prayer anywhere, or that anyone—man or woman—could preach, they have been looked upon by some as forerunners of the Protestant revolt.

**Heresy suppressed.** Although southern France was noted for its tolerance, the Church appreciated the dangers to itself from these two groups of heretics. Innocent III tried for ten years to reconvert them, and failing in his purpose, he instigated a crusade in 1208 against the county of Toulouse, where many of the subjects of its ruler, Count Raymond, subscribed to the Albigensian heresy. The crusade began with horrible slaughter. Heretics and protectors of heretics were put to the sword. "‘Kill them all, God will know His own’ has reëchoed down the centuries as the slogan of the conflict which ensued . . . massacre followed massacre with all the cruelty which perverted fanaticism could devise."<sup>16</sup> Hundreds of worldly knights flocked to Tou-

louse to extirpate the heretics, not because they were interested in strengthening the Pope's authority but because they saw in the crusade a good opportunity to become rich by seizing the lands of the Albigenses. In fact, the Pope promised their land to the crusaders. Soon the south of France was the scene of savage fighting, with the original religious motive of the crusade lost in a welter of selfish cross-currents. The crusaders were out after land, the Count of Toulouse was desperately trying to eject the invaders, and on the sidelines the king of France was waiting his chance to step in and incorporate Toulouse into his own domain.

Amid the fighting commerce dwindled and the culture of Toulouse—perhaps the finest in Europe—rapidly declined. The Albigensian heresy was almost completely destroyed by fire and sword, and the lands of the Count of Toulouse were obtained by the king of France, who benefited most of all by the religious fanaticism. It was many years before the splendid culture of Toulouse was able to stage a revival.

Thus the thirteenth-century Church was able to suppress the growing heresies in Europe. But the time came when the Popes could not destroy the work of such reformers as Wycliffe and Hus so easily as they had destroyed the Albigensians.

**The mendicant Franciscans.** The second important phenomenon of the medieval reformation was the rise of the two great mendicant orders of the thirteenth century, the Franciscans and Dominicans. St. Francis of Assisi (1181?-1226) is one of the noblest figures of history. Like Waldo of Lyons, he rejected riches and spread the gospel of poverty and Christian simplicity. The order he founded was strictly evangelical, for its members were friars (*fratres*), who differed from the monks in that they went about preaching and teaching the gospel to others, whereas the monks lived a sequestered life and were primarily interested in personal salvation. Francis was convinced that his friars must own absolutely nothing of a personal nature. Hence they were begging, or mendicant, brothers. The character of the poetic Francis has been mentioned before. Infinitely lovable, simple, humble, and of great physical and moral bravery, Francis was a fine example of the best of medieval religious idealism.

Simplicity of life and humanitarianism were fundamentals in St. Francis' *Rule*:

"I counsel, also warn, and exhort my brethren in our Lord Jesus Christ that they brawl not . . . but that they be meek, peaceable, soft, gentle, and courteous and lowly, honestly speaking and answering to every man as unto them accordeth and belongeth. And they shall not ride, but if they be constrained by evident necessity or else by sickness.

"I command steadfastly and straitly to all the brethren that in nowise they receive any manner of coin or money, but care shall be taken of the sick."<sup>17</sup>

The papacy saw in the zeal and fervor of the Franciscans a great weapon with which to combat the rising tide of heresy. To bring the order more in conformity with its plans, it set aside Francis' will in 1230 (four years after he had died and two years after his canonization as a saint) and saw to it that the Franciscans had an elaborate form of government and possessed property. The order split into two factions: those who accepted the new order, the Moderates or Conventuals, and those who refused to give up the ideals of their founder, the Spirituals or Observants. Nevertheless, the Franciscans did an immense amount of good work both in instructing the common people in matters of faith and in helping the poor. By the beginning of the fourteenth century the Spirituals were being burned at the stake, although they were upholding the ideals of their beloved founder.

**The Dominican Friars.** St. Dominic (1170-1221) founded his order in 1206. It was confirmed in 1216 and received the name of Friars Preachers, although it is commonly known as the Dominican order. St. Dominic was a prac-

tical-minded Spaniard whose zeal for the propagation of the faith knew no bounds. Dominic met St. Francis and his followers once and was so impressed that he knelt before Francis.

"Truly God hath taken care of these saintly little ones and I did not know it. Wherefore I now promise to observe holy evangelistic poverty, and I in God's name utter a malediction against all brethren of my order who in the said order shall presume to have possessions of their own."<sup>18</sup>

Versed in theology, these preachers were skilled in debate and attempted to destroy both clerical and lay ignorance. They were soon occupying the chairs of theology at the universities (whose origin and significance are discussed in the next chapter) and so helped formulate theological doctrines. The Dominicans were also controlled by the papacy, and like the Franciscans they were put in charge of the Inquisition.

**Later mendicants.** The Dominicans as well as the Franciscans came with the passage of time to own much wealth and thereby to fall from the high purposes of their zealous founder, until we find Chaucer describing Huberd, the wanton friar, thus:

In towns he knew the taverns, every one,  
And every good host and each barmaid too—  
Better than begging lepers, these he knew.  
For unto no such solid man as he  
Accorded it, as far as he could see,  
To have sick lepers for acquaintances.  
There is no honest advantageousness  
In dealing with such poverty-stricken curs;  
It's with the rich and with big victuallers.  
And so, wherever profit might arise,  
Courteous he was and humble in men's eyes.<sup>19</sup>

### *Innocent III and the Zenith of the Church*

**Innocent III.** Innocent III was born in 1161, not far from Rome. We know little of his early life, though he came from a noble family. He studied law at Bologna and theology at Paris, and later entrusted high offices to some of his former teachers. Some of his relatives were cardinals, and he himself earned a thorough knowledge of papal administration. At 29 he was a cardinal, and when only 37 he became Pope. This scholarly, brilliant, and sincere pontiff took the name Innocent. Innocent III, a dignified person at all times, held an

exalted view of his office. In his own words:

"The successor of Peter is the Vicar of Christ: he has been established as a mediator between God and man, below God but beyond man; less than God but more than man; who shall judge all and be judged by no one."<sup>20</sup>

Gregory VII had nearly succeeded in fulfilling this ideal in its entirety; Innocent III was to succeed completely. The new Pope told the princes of Europe that the papacy was as the sun, whereas the kings were as the moon:

One should rule the day (men's souls), the other the night (their bodies). Even as the moon derives its light from the sun, so do kings derive their powers from the Pope.

*Innocent and the French-English quarrel.* Innocent III was not only complete master of the Church in all administrative, judicial, and financial matters but politically powerful outside the Church. His interference in matters pertaining to France and England is of the greatest importance. As we shall see later, the kings of France throughout the Middle Ages had one main objective in foreign policy: to oust the English king as a feudal landowner from France. Richard of England and Philip Augustus of France were bitter enemies and plotted and fought against each other almost continuously. Innocent persuaded Richard and Philip to sign a five-year truce.

John, who succeeded to the English throne upon Richard's death, soon showed himself to be a miserable ruler. He was probably the worst king England ever had. He arbitrarily interfered in the election of bishops, illegally seized church revenues, and in general browbeat the Church as he did all his subjects. Finally, after the disputed election for the archbishopric of Canterbury, in which Innocent's candidate, Stephen Langton, was elected, relations between the Pope and the king were broken off. When John refused to receive Langton and drove the Canterbury monks into exile, Innocent placed England under interdict in 1208, and John under excommunication in 1209. Although John continued his struggle against clergy and nobles for several years, he finally had to capitulate to Innocent by receiving Langton, compensating the clergy, becoming the vassal of the Pope, receiving England back as a fief, and paying a tribute of one thousand marks a year. Innocent now dealt with Philip Augustus of France, whose power had in the meanwhile increased. While Philip was not forced into the humiliating position of John, he capitulated in 1213 to the Pope's demands that the king should

take back as his rightful queen the lovely Ingeborg of Denmark whom he had tried to divorce.

*Innocent and the Empire.* When Henry VI died in 1197, the Empire did not go at once to his three-year-old son Frederick. Innocent took him as his ward and eventually had his position confirmed (1215). Meanwhile Otto IV had been elected emperor, and in assuming the title in 1209, Otto had revived Hohenstaufen claims to supremacy. Innocent hurled against him the anathema of the Church and set about advancing the claims of his ward Frederick, who promised that he would never incorporate his kingdom of Sicily with the northern states.

Innocent's opportunity came when Otto IV became involved in a war with Philip Augustus. King John of England detested and feared Philip of France, while Otto believed that Pope Innocent III might utilize the French king to depose him and substitute Frederick. John organized a strong coalition led by himself and Otto and marched against Paris. In 1214 a splendidly trained French army crushed the forces of Otto and John, leaving Otto helpless. At the Lateran Council in 1215 Innocent III deposed the emperor and confirmed the youthful Frederick as ruler of the Holy Roman Empire. Innocent died in 1216, too soon to find out what kind of ward he had been championing in the interests of the papacy.

*The papacy at its height.* With John of England the vassal of the Pope, Philip Augustus forced to abide by Innocent's decisions, and the leadership of the Holy Roman Empire dictated from Rome, the papacy had attained its zenith of temporal power. Innocent's ideal of a papal theocracy appeared realized, for the nations of Europe had acknowledged the power of Christ's vicar. True enough, strong-minded monarchs and Popes whose ability in no wise matched that of Innocent III were one day to topple papal supremacy from its throne. But during the pontificate of Innocent III (1198-1216) he could and did "judge all and be judged by no one."

### *The Church: Center of Medieval Life*

**C**hurch appeal for common people. Thus far we have considered the Church largely as a universal political and religious organization. Here we shall deal with its appeal to the common people, which did not lie in

its Petrine theory, its carefully worked out theology, or its pretensions to universal authority. The appeal had to be much more human and informal in order to hold the allegiance of the simple but devout Christian of



the French countryside or English village. The medieval Church was very real in the lives of the people. They were born into it, and they died in its embrace; it was at once their moral guide and their spiritual sustenance; it brought them solace on this earth and assured them salvation in the next life.

**Pilgrimages.** Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* can give us clues regarding the "humanness" of medieval religious life. Here were twenty-nine pilgrims "of ful devout courage," wending their way leisurely through the English countryside to worship at the shrine of the martyred St. Thomas à Becket at Canterbury. In addition to the religious benefits to be achieved by pilgrimages, these journeys gave people a chance to travel, to see new sights and customs, and to converse with pilgrims outside their own neighborhood. Thus pilgrimages proved to be social attractions, and that they were anything but dull and solemn can be seen by reading the tales which Chaucer's pilgrims told one another.

**Saints and relics.** Chaucer also gives us an insight into two more aspects of popular religious practices, the cult of the saints and martyrs, and the belief in the miraculous power of relics. The veneration of saints and martyrs, such as Thomas à Becket, loomed large in medieval religious life. Every medieval group had its patron saint, who could always be relied upon to give heavenly aid in times of war, famine, pestilence, and personal trouble. Frenchmen rode into battle invoking the aid of St. Denis, Englishmen shouted, "St. George for England!" and Scotsmen looked to St. Andrew for help. The Christian of the Middle Ages would address his patron saint with a familiarity and tell stories about the blessed one's personal life in a manner which would shock a religious person today.

Our medieval ancestors relied a great deal on relics. Most people believed implicitly in the power of such a relic as the thigh bone of some obscure saint to stop disease or create better harvests. The manner in which illiterate persons were duped by unscrupulous traffickers in fictitious relics has been vividly recounted by Chaucer when he describes his Pardoner:

Was no such pardoner in any place.  
For in his bag he had a pillawcase

The which, he said, was Our True Lady's veil:  
He said he had a piece of the very sail  
That good Saint Peter had, what time he went  
Upon the sea, till Jesus changed his bent.  
He had a latten cross set full of stones,  
And in a bottle had he some pig's bones.  
But with these relics, when he came upon  
Some simple parson, then this paragon  
In that one day more money stood to gain  
Than the poor dupe in two months could attain.

And thus, with flattery and suchlike japes,  
He made the parson and the rest his apes.<sup>21</sup>

Yet this reverence of relics stimulated artistic production. Caskets and reliquaries designed to hold these "pigges bones" encouraged craftsmen to create beautiful objects of gold, silver, and enamel, and even churches were built as resting-places for the remains of saints and other venerated objects.

An Italian visitor in 1496 described thus the wealth surrounding the shrine of Becket at Canterbury:

"The magnificence of the tomb of St. Thomas the Martyr, Archbishop of Canterbury, surpasses all belief. This, notwithstanding its great size, is entirely covered over with plates of pure gold; but the gold is scarcely visible from the variety of precious stones with which it is studded, such as sapphires, diamonds, rubies, and emeralds; and on every side that the eye turns, something more beautiful than the other appears. And these beauties of nature are enhanced by human skill, for the gold is carved and engraved in beautiful designs, both large and small, and agates, jaspers, and cornelians set in relief, some of the cameos being of such a size that I dare not mention it. But everything is left far behind by a ruby, not larger than a man's thumb nail, which is set to the right of the altar. The church is rather dark, and particularly so where the shrine is placed, and when we went to see it, the sun was nearly gone down and the weather was cloudy; yet I saw that ruby as well as if I had it in my hand; they say it was the gift of a king of France."<sup>22</sup>

**The veneration of Mary.** The magnificent Gothic cathedrals of France attest the pride of the common people in showing their faith and reverence. The cathedrals were symbols in stone of the people's concepts of God, the Trinity, heaven and earth, salvation, and



*The medieval artist cuts away a wall in doll-house fashion to show us the interior of a church in this miniature painting from the *Miracles of Notre Dame*. A religious service is in progress.*

above all the love and protection of the Virgin Mary. The veneration of Mary was one of the most magnificent and potent forces in medieval religion. In an age when the prospect of hell and eternal damnation loomed perilously close indeed, and when even the most educated person could see in thunderstorms, pestilence, and famines only the evil designs of ever-lurking devils and soul-snatchers, how natural and comforting it was to turn to her who could always be relied upon to protect and comfort. As an earthly mother will supplicate for mercy on behalf of her erring child, so the mother of Christ would always supplicate in heaven for other mothers' children on earth.

**Religion in the town.** The universality of the Church brought its influence into every home. Approaching a medieval town, one would see above the thick city walls the tapering spires of the cathedral, the largest and most centrally located structure in the community. Entering the city, the modern visitor would be amazed to see the narrow streets filled with ecclesiastics—black- and yellow-

cowled monks rubbing shoulders with steel-helmeted soldiers of a lord bishop's retinue, nuns and their charges hurrying past tavern doors to escape coarse comments, pilgrims staring at unfamiliar objects while searching out the local shrine, and perhaps a cavalcade clattering over the uneven road and announcing the arrival of a great papal legate from overseas. Many buildings would be church property. Churches, monasteries, colleges, hospitals, or almshouses would meet the eye, as well as the elegant palace of the bishop. For the Church performed many tasks other than that of religion. It was the one great social organization of the Middle Ages. Monks built bridges and repaired roads; the Church's hospitals and almshouses took care of the lepers and the poor; the schools and colleges of the Church were the sole places of education; its courts had jurisdiction over every Christian's moral and religious acts.

The Church supervised the amusements of the populace, and the church porch was the setting of popular religious dramas, or mystery

plays. When one left the city behind, he would see wayside shrines along the highway, parish church steeples everywhere, and the massive buildings of a monastery, whose inmates were engaged (at least during the earlier Middle Ages) in transcribing manuscripts, writing chronicles or local histories, teaching the peasants new methods of farming, tending vineyards, fishing in nearby waters, and making new discoveries in animal husbandry.

**The parish church.** But the Church came closest home at the parish church. We have already read Chaucer's description of the poor parson who taught his parishioners the message of Christ "but first he folwed it hymselfe," and who traveled the length and breadth of his parish in all kinds of weather to minister to the sick and dying and to comfort his spiritual charges. True, the parish priest was often ignorant and even immoral, and he was invariably of low birth, but his lowly origin meant that he was made welcome by the meanest serf on the lord's manor. The Church's popularity depended in the last analysis upon the ability of the parish priest to administer the sacraments, attend the sick, hear confessions, supervise the morals of the parish, and hold the respect of his parishioners.

To peer inside a parish church on a medieval Sunday would be a revelation to the modern mind, for the scene would prove how human and informal yet indispensable religion was to our medieval forebears:

"The conduct at a service would probably astonish the modern; the knight sauntered about with hawk on wrist, his dogs following, and perhaps fighting, behind; the women gathered together and talked (as women do) and

laughed and took mental notes of each other's dresses for future imitation or disparagement. It was enumerated among the virtues of St. Louis that he rarely conducted business of State while he was attending service in Church."<sup>23</sup>

Despite the apparent lack of reverence, the congregation gazed with awe and complete faith toward the altar where the priest intoned the age-old words of simplicity and power, and where the solemn mystery of transubstantiation took place.

The parish priest would give his charges their religious instruction mainly during the sermon. He would paint for them the terrors of hell—how the damned are thrust from the flames into icy water so they do not know which is worse, since each state is intolerable, and how, "to increase their pains the loathsome hell-worms, toads, and frogs that eat out their eyes and nostrils, and adders and water-frogs, not like those here, but a hundred times more horrible, sneak in and out of the mouth, ears, eyes, navel, and at the hollow of the breast, as maggots in putrid flesh, ever yet thickest."<sup>24</sup> But heaven was pictured to be just as desirable as hell was hateful, and the Church assured the parishioner of heaven as a reward for his faith. The priest also sermonized on parish topics. He would upbraid the people for their lax attendance at church, their addiction to the joys of the tavern, their squabbling and fighting, their laziness or gluttony. He was their father confessor and moral teacher. He knew every member of the community intimately. He made every person, high or low, supremely aware of the vividness, the omnipresence, and the reality of religion.

### *Summary*

With this picture of how the medieval Church functioned in the lives of every man, high or low, in Christendom, we conclude our discussion of the Age of Faith. We have surveyed the structure of Europe's greatest medieval organization and examined the doctrines to which it adhered. We have seen how the Church enforced its will and how it was involved in the feudal system. We have followed the eras of reform in the Church and seen its power culminating in the magnificent pontificate of Innocent III. Lastly, we have tried to appreciate how real was the influence of the Church in the everyday life of our medieval ancestors.

The Church made rich contributions in the realms of religion, government, and society. Not only did it spread the message of Christianity throughout Europe and give

men a sense of security against the fears of the unknown in an age when superstition was rife, but it championed a Christlike code of ethics and morality. As a great international institution which persisted through centuries of political upheaval, the Church possessed the only unified system of law and governmental administration in Europe. It acted as mediator between kings and princes, and gave to the western world perhaps its first glimpse of the value of an international political organization. In the social field it attempted to humanize warfare, fostered the code of chivalry, performed deeds of charity, fulfilled such necessary community tasks as the repairing of bridges and roads, and tried to raise business standards through banning usury and unfair trade practices.

In the following chapter we shall see how the medieval Church also fostered artistic expression and intellectual inquiry. The Middle Ages have been called the Age of Faith, because the people as a whole believed in the Church and her mission to an extent which we, in our age of intellectual criticism and science, do not. But it would be an unfortunate mistake were we to view the Middle Ages as devoid of intellectual interests or scientific achievements.

## MEDIEVAL THOUGHT AND ART: 400-1400

### 400-900      Thought and Art in the Early Middle Ages

476-800	Education limited to few schools of Church Clergy practically the only educated class	
8th century	Carolingian revival in architecture	Modified basilica style; majority of buildings of wood—later destroyed
781	Charlemagne's Palace School established	

### 900-1200      Thought and Art from 900-1200

11th century	Nominalist-Realist controversy intensified	
11th and 12th cen.	Flowering of Latin literature	Goliardic verse: Hugh the Primate's <i>Confession of Goliath</i>
11th and 12th cen.	Cathedral schools produce greatest scholars of Europe	
1000-1150	Development of basilica into Romanesque style of architecture	Round arch, thick walls, barrel vaulting
1079-1142	Abelard's spirit of inquiry stimulates intel- lectual curiosity	<i>Sic et Non</i>
12th century	Hindu, Persian, Greek, Arab learning comes to west via translations	
12th century	'Renaissance of 12th Century': Birth of the University	Great universities at Oxford, Paris, and Bologna
12th and 13th cen.	Rise of vernacular literature	<i>Nibelungenlied</i> , <i>Chansons de geste</i>
1187	Death of Gerard of Cremona, famous translator of scientific books	
1194-1250	Frederick II champions scientific thought	Writes remarkable treatise, <i>On the Art of Hunting with Falcons</i>

### 1200-1400      Thought and Art in Later Middle Ages

13th century	Science of castle-building perfected	
13th century	Science of mathematics developed by Leonard of Pisa	Finds method for extracting square roots and solving quadratic and cubic equations
13th century	Roger Bacon advocates the experimental method in science	
13th century	Scholasticism reaches greatest height	
13th and 14th cen.	Culmination of Gothic Architecture	Utilized mainly for cathedrals Highest development in France
1274	Death of Thomas Aquinas, most famous medie- val scholar	<i>Summa Theologiae</i>
14th century	Vernacular literature developed	Scholarship and poetry combined in Dante's <i>Divine Comedy</i> William Langland's <i>Vision of Piers Plowman</i> upbraids the ignorance and corruption of the Church Chaucer's <i>Canterbury Tales</i> : excellent picture of medieval England
14th century	Public health benefited	Use of medicinal baths; use of quar- antine; leprosy gradually wiped out

## CHAPTER 14

### *University and Cathedral*



**I**N the Seine River at Paris is a small island on which stands a great edifice of weatherbeaten stone. Its towers have been etched against the sky for hundreds of years, and its massive shadow has afforded welcome relief on countless summer days to thoughtful scholars and carefree students. Paris gazes with veneration upon its lovely cathedral dedicated to the glory of Our Lady, a cathedral made famous by poet and painter. This structure and its many rich associations offer a fascinating glimpse into the life and treasures of the Middle Ages. Begun in 1163 and completed in 1235, Notre Dame de Paris was constructed during some of the most exciting and epoch-making decades of the entire medieval period.

While workmen were fashioning the graceful towers which are the pride of the cathedral, supporting its vault with arched flying buttresses, and carefully fitting the many-colored windows into place, churchmen and students lolled on the Petit Pont that led to the Left Bank, where were situated buildings that represented the capital of Europe's learning. True, Abélard was no longer alive to hold eager young minds spell-bound with the brilliance of his lectures. But the shadow of the rising cathedral fell on worthy successors, who wrangled over the Trinity on street corners and accused one another of heresy in their lectures. In the new University were sacrilegious students who penned clever blasphemous poems which parodied the sacred liturgy but who were one day to occupy episcopal thrones as sober princes of the Church. On the great throne of St. Peter in Rome sat the mightiest ruler of all Christendom, the Pope who was one day to be regarded as the symbol of the medieval Church at the zenith of its earthly power—Innocent III, who had himself once studied at Paris.

During the Middle Ages the dreaded Mongols rose under the redoubtable Genghis Khan in Asia, the Byzantine capital was scuttled by Venetian pirates and crusading freebooters, a brilliant court flourished in Sicily during the reign of that extraordinary scientist-monarch, Frederick II, and the great new religious orders were founded, one by the gentle humanitarian, Saint Francis of Assisi. All these events took place while scaffolding partly hid the growing beauty of Notre Dame de Paris, a shrine worthy to adorn France's proud capital and a fitting monument to the glory of the Virgin. The townsmen of Paris had dedicated their cathedral to Our Lady and ascribed to her the place of honor in the great rose windows, a significant point, for such was the spirit in which all France's cathedrals were constructed.

We are now to concern ourselves with the thought and art of medieval times. The cathedral of Notre Dame and the University of Paris should forever silence those voices which would maintain that the Middle Ages were devoid of artistic and intellectual splendor. We shall soon discover how keen were medieval minds as they debated intricate points of philosophy, translated classical and Arab treatises into the Latin which they spoke as volubly as their own tongue, and spun complex theological theories in an effort to reconcile faith and reason. We shall notice other men who made valuable advances in the physical sciences and so helped pave the way for the civilization which we possess today. Still other thinkers contributed to the growth of education and created one of the finest medieval institutions, the university. Nor can we forget the rich array of poets, troubadours, and student versifiers who sang of the joys and sorrows of human nature and produced from their numbers such immortals as Dante and Chaucer. Then, having wandered through medieval Europe with these poets, we can retrace our steps to the great Gothic structures that rose above the roof tops of almost every town and hamlet.

A study of the thought and art of the Middle Ages should re-create those centuries for us by making us realize that the twelfth was just as vital a century as the twentieth. It should also completely dispel the old delusion that medieval culture was sterile and backward. The fundamental difference between our ancestors of the Middle Ages and ourselves is not one of character and intelligence but of perspective. If they laid their offerings upon the altar of theology and not upon the altar of science as we do, if they built cathedrals and not skyscrapers, and if their strength was derived from an age of faith instead of an age of steel, they surely are not to be condemned. Their Abélard is worthy to stand beside Einstein and Notre Dame de Paris beside the Empire State Building.

### *Philosophy*

**M***edieval and Greek philosophy compared.* Man has always worried about how he came to be alive, why he is alive, and what will happen to him when he is dead. We have seen how the Greeks tried earnestly to find answers to these eternal questions. The success with which they evolved philosophical theories was due largely to their great freedom

of thought. The Greeks stood at the dawn of a new western European civilization. They were free to think as they wished. Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle produced the finest achievements of this intellectual freedom. During the Middle Ages men were just as eager to explain the problems of life, but they labored under handicaps which the Greeks

did not have to encounter. Where the Greek philosopher possessed freedom, the medieval philosopher was possessed by authority. Where the former placed his faith in reason, the latter was forced to place his reason in faith.

In the chapter on the medieval Church we described how that vast institution came to control the political and religious life of western Christendom. The theology of the Church was based on certain sources which were considered infallible: (1) the Scriptures, (2) the creed and dogmas as set forth by Church councils, and (3) the writings of such Church Fathers as St. Augustine. Thus the Scriptures were shaped into an authoritative dogma, one which could not be questioned.<sup>1</sup>

**Nominalism versus Realism.** But problems were bound to arise whenever scholars had to deal with a dogma for which they could not find any rational basis. Berengar of Tours, for example, came to question the doctrine of transubstantiation, while other scholars argued over the eternal problem of free will and predestination. Two schools came into prominence, each maintaining that it could better interpret the so-called "unexplainable" dogmas. The two schools, which came to be called the Realists and the Nominalists, both existed within the jurisdiction of the Church, and both claimed complete allegiance to it. Furthermore, high-ranking ecclesiastics were to be found enrolled in the ranks of each of the rival camps, although the Church, for reasons which we shall soon see, tended to favor the school called Realism.

The Realists and the Nominalists fought over the problem of universal ideas. Let us recall the controversy between Plato and Aristotle over this point. Plato said that reality consists in a hierarchy of general Ideas. Of these the most important was the Idea of the Good. Hence, to Plato, a specific object was real only in so far as it represented the nature of its Idea; Socrates, for example, was real only in so far as he partook of the Idea of Man. Aristotle held a completely opposite view. Individuals exist as individuals; Socrates as such was real. To Aristotle it was not possible that before man was created he existed as an Idea somewhere or that human man was not a real entity but only a reflection of a universal Idea of Man.

In the Middle Ages men were as sharply divided on the point. To the Realists, only

universal Ideas could be real and exist independently without any reference to the names given them. To the Nominalists (who were in the minority), abstract concepts such as universal Ideas were only names (*nomina*) and had no real existence. The Realists as a group naturally placed more reliance upon faith than the Nominalists did, because they believed in the existence of universal Ideas. The Realist view was first put forward clearly by Anselm, archbishop of Canterbury, who said man learns in two ways, by faith and reason. While Anselm is famous for his statement "I do not seek to know to the end that I may believe, but I believe that I may know," he nevertheless maintained that reason could be used to prove the existence of God. Anselm himself championed the cause of Realism, asserting that Nominalism "was not only philosophical nonsense, but was incompatible with the dogma of the Trinity."<sup>2</sup> Anselm was here arguing against the views of an outstanding Nominalist, Roscellinus of Compiègne. Roscellinus was held to be guilty of theological heresy. How could a Christian possibly assert that the Church had no real existence apart from the congregation of individual men who worshiped? Roscellinus' position meant that there was no Church but only thousands of separate churches, that the unity of the Trinity could not exist. It meant that he was worshiping three Gods. In 1092 the Council of Soissons condemned this heretical position, and Roscellinus was forced to recant.

**Abélard and Conceptualism.** What the eleventh-century logicians did not comprehend was that either Realism or Nominalism, carried out to its logical extreme, resulted in a *reductio ad absurdum*. Realism became pantheism (that is, the universe as a whole is God), and Nominalism became materialism (that is, the universe is composed solely of matter), tenets equally abhorrent to the Church. Pierre Abélard (1079-1142) has been traditionally credited with having effected the acceptable compromise known as Conceptualism. A brilliant scholar, lover, poet, dialectician, and exponent of the critical method, Abélard is one of the most fascinating and tragic of all historical characters. Clever to the point of antagonizing his theological masters to acts of dangerous revenge, vain of his excellent poetry and attractiveness to women, and utterly lacking in tact and diplomacy, Abélard



nevertheless excites our profound admiration both for his intellectual gifts and the impetus he gave to learning.

Abélard ridiculed his pompous teacher, William of Champeaux, and drove him into an untenable position of extreme Realism. Abélard took the stand that universal terms have no objective existence as such; they exist only as thoughts or concepts in our minds. Thus, he distinguished between a thing itself (*res*) and its name (*nomen*). How do we get the mental concept "chair"? By experience, he would reply. By seeing many chairs and sitting in them, our minds note certain similarities among them all. We see that each has as its purpose the bearing of our weight, that in general each has four legs, is movable, and has a back. From all these similarities, our observation and experience build up a concept "chair." Therefore, there exists in particular things a similarity or identity of qualities, through whose abstraction a concept is formed by a mental act. To that extent, therefore, class terms are objectively valid.

**Abélard and St. Bernard.** Abélard has been remembered for other matters as well. He had a tragic love affair with the beautiful Héloïse, the niece of Canon Fulbert of Notre Dame, and a continuous quarrel with St. Bernard of Clairvaux. Abélard was gifted with an inquiring mind that accepted no authority blindly. Hence he said, "By doubts we are led to inquire; by inquiring we perceive the truth." St. Bernard, more saintly than Abélard, was a devout mystic who relied on unquestioning faith to win the truth for man. He was an ascetic who viewed all pagan writings with severe distrust and, although he allowed manuscripts to be copied, forbade all illumination and ornament. Abélard and St. Bernard had nothing in common save a burning sincerity for the cause which each championed.

**Abélard's spirit of inquiry.** Perhaps Abélard's greatest significance lies in the challenge he made against the mental habits of his age. He said that we must learn to doubt, for doubting leads us to inquire, and inquiry leads us to the truth. This is the true spirit of inductive science based upon observation, experimentation, and intellectual skepticism. While he himself could never transcend superimposed authority, he did stimulate intellectual curiosity by writing his *Sic et Non* (*Yes and No*). His epoch-making work proposes

158 questions concerning faith and reason, the angels, Adam and Eve, the origin of evil, and other problems. According to the prologue his intention was to compile a list of apparent contradictions which are to be found in the most authoritative writings of the Church. These are typical propositions propounded in *Sic et Non*:

1. That faith is to be supported by human reason, *et contra*.
5. That God is not single, *et contra*.
55. That only Eve, not Adam, was beguiled, *et contra*.
122. That marriage is lawful for all, *et contra*.
141. That works of mercy do not profit those without faith, *et contra*.
154. That a lie is permissible, *et contra*.<sup>3</sup>

In Holy Scripture, of course, there can be no real contradictions; therefore the discrepancies are to be reconciled by rational interpretation. Abélard himself offered no reconciliation, but he undoubtedly believed that it was possible. So did his pupil Peter Lombard, whose *Sentences* (*Opinions*) became immensely popular. What Abélard perhaps did not comprehend was that he had set in motion a system of inquiry which was to bring problems of Biblical criticism in its train.

**Greek and Arabic learning.** In Abélard's lifetime, in the twelfth century, the west began to undertake a serious study of Greek and Arabic learning. The early Middle Ages had been able to digest only the works of the Latin Church Fathers and such classical science as was contained in Pliny's *Natural History*. In the early Middle Ages Byzantine and Mohammedan scholarship was far superior to anything in the west. Because of the prevailing ignorance of Greek and Arabic in Europe, western scholars for centuries were virtually ignorant of what was transpiring elsewhere.

In the Norman kingdom of southern Italy and Sicily, in Spain, and in southern France, scholars began to study and translate Greek and Arabic manuscripts. By the end of the twelfth century many important Latin translations of Greek philosophical and scientific works had been made. Western Christendom also learned now of the intellectual contributions of the Mohammedan world. Prior to the thirteenth century learning in the east had

far outshone that in the west. The era of translation tended to change matters, however. The learning of the east became available for scholars in western Europe, the intellectual pulse quickened in the west, and from that time forward the west achieved the greater intellectual results.

The most important of the western translators was Gerard of Cremona, who translated some seventy Arabic works into Latin before his death in 1187. Most of Gerard's translations concern scientific subjects such as astronomy, mathematics, and medicine. "Indeed, more of Arabic science in general passed into western Europe at the hands of Gerard of Cremona than in any other way."<sup>4</sup> The philosophical implications resulting from the opening up of eastern thought were enormous. Aristotle's *Ethics*, *Poetics*, and *Rhetoric* were translated directly from Greek. When all his logic was brought to the west, it established him there as the master of logic. To the medical thinker he was in all learning an authority considered second only to the Scriptures. Arabic numerals, the algebra and trigonometry of Al-Khwarizmi, Euclid's *Geometry*, Ptolemy's *Almagest* (which established the geocentric view of the universe until Copernicus refuted it in the sixteenth century), treatises of Hippocrates and Galen in medicine, Avicenna's *Canon of Medicine*, and Arabic works on optics, alchemy, and physics brought into the west a host of ideas which had to be reconciled with existing Church dogmas.

**The task of reconciliation.** The heroic, if impossible, task of reconciliation resulted in what is known as Scholasticism. Theologians tried to apply Aristotelian logic to the new Greek and Arabic science and philosophy and to harmonize the whole with the Scriptures and Church dogmas in order to show the purpose of God's plan. The problem was exceedingly complicated. A great deal of the new-found knowledge was the product of Aristotle's brain, while further material came from Plato by way of the mystical school of Neo-Platonism. Thus Neo-Platonism and Aristotelianism had to be spliced and the two brought into agreement with the theology of the Church. It was no easy matter to make Christians out of Aristotle and Plato, although the two pagans were treated by medieval scholars with almost as much veneration as though they had been canonized by the Pope.

To the modern reader, the net result is brilliant but scarcely convincing. But the enormity of the task excites our admiration. With mingled devotion and confidence the scholars of the time wrote compendiums of knowledge called *summae* (from the Latin for "sum total") which tried to include systematic treatises on theology and related subjects, such as science.

But the irreconcilable would not be reconciled, even though the cause was highly religious and idealistic. Adelard of Bath, who introduced Arabic science into England in the twelfth century and who believed that reason, not authority, should be the final judge, says as much to his nephew: "It is hard to discuss with you, for I learned one thing from the Arabs under the guidance of reason; you follow another halter, caught by the appearance of authority; for what is authority but a halter?"<sup>5</sup>

In the thirteenth century Scholasticism attained its greatest heights. Both Realists and Nominalists were Scholastics, and the greatest of them lived in the thirteenth century. With such authorities as the Bible, the creeds developed in the Church councils, the writings of the Church Fathers, and the works of Aristotle they sought by deductive reasoning to harmonize theology and reason, sacred and profane learning, science and religion. Two such scholars were St. Albertus Magnus and St. Thomas Aquinas.

**St. Albertus Magnus.** Albert the Great (1193-1280), a German, the principal master of the Dominicans at Paris, wrote a *Summa Theologiae* of thirty-eight quarto volumes. It is an interpretation of Aristotle in the light of Christian truth. Although his great work was lacking in coherence and symmetry, Albert is remembered for "testing authority by experience." Such a contribution from the thirteenth century is worthy of admiration. In fact, it makes us recognize how false is the generalization that the Middle Ages were devoid of any critical faculty where doctrines were involved.

**St. Thomas Aquinas.** It remained for Albertus' Italian pupil St. Thomas Aquinas (1225?-1274) to bring Scholasticism to its culminating peak of attainment. Modern critics have called him "the greatest of the schoolmen." Aquinas, for one, wanted to purge Aristotle's works of the heretical views which had come in through translations from the Arabic

as well as through commentaries on Aristotle by such great Moslem thinkers as Averroës. Aquinas at last attained the formula which was to be accepted by the Church as the final statement of the relation between philosophy and revelation, reason and faith. In his *Summa Theologiae* the Scholastic did not falter in his task, insurmountable though it seemed. Aquinas refused to hold one conviction on rationalistic principles and the opposite conviction on faith. Therefore, working industriously from the most basic of premises, even from proving the existence of God to his satisfaction, Aquinas built his cathedral of Scholastic philosophy on the twin pillars of authority and Aristotle. He aimed through logic to reconcile all science with the creed of the Church. So successful was Aquinas in his task that his works are today used as basic texts in Catholic schools and colleges. Whether or not one agrees that Aquinas succeeded in reconciling Aristotle with Christianity and reason with faith, everyone must agree that he made a magnificent effort, an effort which exhibits unsurpassed powers of systematization and a gift of lucid presentation. As Henry Osborn Taylor states: "Of all mediæval men, St. Thomas Aquinas achieved the most organic and comprehensive union of the results of human reasoning and the data of Christian theology. He may be regarded as the final exponent of Scholasticism, perfected in method, universal in scope, and still integral in purpose."<sup>6</sup>

**The decline of Scholasticism.** But Scholasticism, having reached its zenith, soon began to decline rapidly. Aquinas had maintained that certain doctrines are beyond discovery by the unassisted reason. Two Franciscan thinkers, William of Occam and Duns Scotus, began to argue that if reason confines us to the natural world and divinely revealed truth is not understandable by the human intellect, then what the human reason can hope to attain is so far removed from divine truth as to be quite uncertain. Such a position served to separate philosophy from theology,

to reawaken an interest in Nominalism, to justify the growing scientific spirit, and to weaken the unifying authority of the Church. There were other reasons which explain the decay of Scholasticism. It was losing its grasp on life. Philosophy was becoming empty, divorced from the new forces of the age.

**Significance of Scholasticism.** Men had begun to doubt and to inquire; the truth which they now perceived was not Scholasticism. But too many writers have dismissed medieval philosophy by saying that the Scholastics wasted all their time arguing about how many angels could dance on the point of a pin. That is by no means the whole story. The Middle Ages strove to unify everything. There was one great Church, which encompassed all Christians, one great Holy Roman Empire, whose ideal was to unite all peoples, one feudal, manorial, and guild system, which tried to attain a common denominator for men's social and economic relations. Therefore it was logical for thinkers to try to work out an all-embracing system of thought to reconcile and direct faith, logic, and science. That it failed to impress all men is no fault of the earnest Scholastics. Today we have not successfully reconciled religion and science, nor have we even unified our warring political and economic ideologies.

The controversy between the Nominalists and the Realists has significance today. Realism stood for the old order; its trust was placed in authority, and the group was considered more important than the individual. Nominalism stood for the order which was to come in the modern age; it revolted against authority, and the individual was considered superior to the group. Nominalism stood for inductive science, just as Realism favored deductive philosophy. Roger Bacon, the great thirteenth-century English scientist and Nominalist, indicated this when he said, "One individual is worth more than all the universals in the world. God has not created the world for the sake of the universal man but for the sake of individual persons."<sup>7</sup>

### *Science in the Middle Ages*

**Obstacles to science.** Many people think that the Middle Ages were completely lacking in any scientific attainments, that its thinkers spent their time debating useless ques-

tions, and that they never interested themselves in experimentation. It is true that the early Middle Ages contributed little of genuine importance to scientific advancement, but

to believe that this is true of the entire period is erroneous.

Science in the Middle Ages was forced to labor under certain adverse conditions. Emphasis was placed principally on theology and authority, and the findings of science were supposed to illuminate rather than contradict the dogmas of the theologians. Moreover, theology is a deductive study. It reasons from given premises. Science as we know it is inductive. It works through experimentation from particulars to a conclusion. Therefore, the methods of theology and science vary radically, and so long as theology had the power to control the actions of science, the latter could not investigate freely. However, let us point out now that there were numerous occasions in medieval times when experimentation was made use of with excellent results and that theology by no means throttled all scientific investigation.

Perhaps the greatest obstacle facing science in the early Middle Ages was its ignorance of Greek learning. Science had to rely for its knowledge upon such compilations as the *Etymologies* of Isidore of Seville. This extremely popular work embraced medicine, law, the liberal arts, animals, agriculture, ships, the earth, the universe, household utensils, and other subjects. It was a work for credulous readers and was often allegorical. Its inaccuracies can be imagined from the following "facts":

"XI, 3, 23. The race of the Sciopodes is said to live in Ethiopia. They have one leg apiece, and are of a marvellous swiftness, and the Greeks call them Sciopodes from this, that in summertime they lie on the ground on their backs and are shaded by the greatness of their feet.

"XII, 7, 18. The swan (*cygnus*) is so called from singing (*canendo*), because it pours forth sweet song in modulated tones. And it sings sweetly for the reason that it has a long curving neck, and it must needs be that the voice, struggling out by a long and winding way, should utter various notes."<sup>8</sup>

**Science advances.** When Greek and Arabic works were translated in the twelfth century, the west came into possession of a magnificent legacy of scientific knowledge. In mathematics the Arabic numerals together with the invention of the zero made the decimal system of computation possible. Algebra came from the

Arabs. Euclid's geometry was now accessible, and trigonometry was borrowed from the Mohammedans. The greatest mathematician of the thirteenth century, Leonard of Pisa, worked out a method of extracting square roots and solving quadratic and cubic equations. In astronomy the geocentric theory of Ptolemy (that the sun revolved about the earth) was generally accepted. Unfortunately for the best interests of science, astronomy was still bound up with astrology, that pseudo-science which maintains that the position of heavenly bodies has an influence upon the destiny of men and nations. Kings and Popes had their private astrologers to forecast the most favorable times for carrying out policies, and even battles were postponed for days so that Mars or Saturn might be in a better position in the heavens to aid the believing general.

**Geography.** Medieval literature on geography was largely a collection of fables. Rivers were to be found full of boiling water, the giant roc was a bird that could lift two elephants, and oceans were filled with gigantic serpents clad in armor who devoured merchant ships. True enough, medieval geography had been slowly progressing in the science of map-making, but the translation of Ptolemy's *Geography* in 1409, with its erroneous concepts, in some respects proved a handicap. One thing that should be emphasized is that the Middle Ages did not look on the earth as flat. Educated men taught and believed that it was a sphere. The voyages of Christian pilgrims and of European traders to China and India gradually added to geographical knowledge. It is said that "The thirteenth century knew China better than we knew it in the middle of the nineteenth century."<sup>9</sup> Navigation progressed slowly, but as early as the twelfth century some sailors were making use of the magnetic compass.

**Physics and chemistry.** Physics was based on Aristotle's theory of four elements—earth, water, air, and fire—and on his theories of dynamics, doctrines which it took centuries to prove wrong. Nevertheless, there were thinkers who attacked Aristotelian physics in the fourteenth century, and several very modern hypotheses were put forward concerning dynamics. Chemistry was also based on Aristotle's theory, combined with a mixture of magic, astrology, and alchemy. The medieval

alchemist tried in vain to transmute base metals into gold and silver and attempted to purify ordinary mercury to obtain "philosophical mercury," which he thought would act as an elixir that could change anything in the world to whatever the owner of the elixir wished. Not until centuries had elapsed did Christian and Arab doctors give up their pursuit. Yet in their search to transmute one metal into another the alchemists indirectly made important discoveries.

**Inventions.** That the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries were not lacking in inventive qualities is shown in this partial enumeration of data compiled by Lynn Thorndike:

"We have both practical inventions and the development of scientific instruments. The invention of the mariner's compass in the twelfth century was followed about 1300 by that of the rudder, and by changes in the build of shipping and in masts, spars, and rigging in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Similarly the invention of gunpowder in the thirteenth century was followed in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries by further developments in fortifications and armor and by the invention of artillery and firearms. The fourteenth century also saw the introduction of the blast furnace and progress in iron-working. Indeed, by 1300 almost all the coal fields of England were being worked, and the iron and textile industries were already in existence; but she did not yet have an empire to which to sell."<sup>10</sup>

**Medieval medicine.** By the thirteenth century the commentaries by Avicenna and Averroës on Galen, Hippocrates, and Aristotle's biology were translated, and the theories of the Greeks and Arabs continued to dominate medicine up to the Renaissance and even, in northern Europe, up to the seventeenth century.

Too much of an entirely fallacious nature has been written regarding medieval medicine. The surgeons of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries were not always barbers who performed crude operations but men who systematically studied the dissection of human bodies and who have left us treatises showing their skill in operations and autopsies. Southern France in the fourteenth century saw the invention of an extracting instrument in dentistry. Anesthesia was understood because narcotics were inhaled, although medieval anesthesia was evidently feeble. A great many

towns had municipal doctors, and sanitary conditions prevailed to a surprising degree in some of the hospitals.

Leprosy in Europe was virtually stamped out in the fourteenth century, a fact that merits our undying gratitude, and public health received an impetus when Venice instituted quarantine (from *quarantina*, forty days) for contagious diseases in the fourteenth century. One problem which always confronted our medieval ancestors was the prevalence of plagues and epidemics. Ignorant of the germ theory of disease and the means of combatting the spread of epidemics successfully, our ancestors accepted the terrible calamities as visitations from God and tried to propitiate heaven.

While epidemics came often in the Middle Ages, perhaps the most calamitous was the Black Death of 1348. The plague probably came by trade routes across Asia and was carried throughout Europe in the course of time. Akin to the bubonic plague, the Black Death killed from perhaps one third to one half of Europe's population. The pestilence took its name from the dark blotches which appeared on the body of the victim, although there were other symptoms such as swellings in the glands so that lumps arose sometimes the size of hen's eggs. The one stricken often vomited blood or became delirious, and most of the victims died within three days. The terror caused by the Black Death in the fourteenth century was heart-rending. Nor did the terror die out, for the plague cropped up time and again all through the Middle Ages.

**Frederick II (1194-1250).** Two fascinating scientists of the Middle Ages were the emperor Frederick II and the Franciscan monk Roger Bacon. Frederick II gathered about him in his Sicilian court many notable scholars (irrespective of their religious beliefs) and was accustomed to addressing questions to scholars in distant countries concerning problems in science. He took a keen delight in zoology, and was famed for his large traveling ménagerie, which included an elephant on which Frederick would mount Saracen troops when the ménagerie traveled. Many experiments are attributed to this brilliant scholar-ruler. One was an attempt to raise children in conditions of absolute silence in order to discover what language they would speak. The attempt never succeeded because the children

died. Frederick wrote a remarkable treatise, *On the Art of Hunting with Falcons*, in which he placed higher reliance upon actual observation than on Aristotle—because “Aristotle seldom or never hunted with birds, while we have ever loved and practiced hawking.” Frederick’s details as to the life and habits of various kinds of hunting birds are still considered largely accurate, and the work is comprehensive in its treatment of ornithology.

**Roger Bacon.** Perhaps the greatest experimental scientist of the Middle Ages was an English Franciscan, Roger Bacon. Bacon favored the inductive method and steadily criticized the scholastic techniques of the day. In his *Opus Maius* he states:

“There are four principal stumbling blocks to comprehending truth, which hinder well-nigh every scholar: the example of frail and unworthy authority, long-established custom, the sense of the ignorant crowd, and the hiding of one’s ignorance under the show of wisdom. In these, every man is involved and every state beset. . . . From these deadly pests come all the evils of the human race; for the noblest and the most useful documents of wisdom are ignored, and the secrets of the arts and sciences. Worse than this, men blinded by the darkness of these four do not see their ignorance but take every care to palliate that for which they do not find the remedy; and, what is the worst, when they are in the densest shades of error, they deem themselves in the full light of truth.”<sup>11</sup>

There is an interesting likeness between Roger Bacon’s four stumbling blocks and the four “Idols” which were to be put forward three centuries afterward by Francis Bacon (no descendant of Roger). Certainly both men won much of their fame by decrying the limitations of Scholasticism and advocating the employment of inductive techniques in science. Yet they were by no means the first to stress the value of observation and experimentation, for Frederick II and St. Albertus Magnus had already glimpsed the light.

But Roger Bacon is unique in that he gave full rein to his imagination and envisaged a world transformed by the empirical sciences. He not only made important findings in optics, geography, and astronomy (from which he advocated a reform of the existing calendar), but his interest in mechanics enabled him to make the most startling predictions, predictions which have since come true with uncanny accuracy.

“Machines for navigating are possible without rowers, so that great ships suited to river or ocean, guided by one man, may be borne with greater speed than if they were full of men. Likewise cars may be made so that without a draught animal they may be moved *cum impetu inaeestimabili*, as we deem the scythed chariots to have been from which antiquity fought. And flying machines are possible, so that a man may sit in the middle turning some device by which artificial wings may beat the air in the manner of a flying bird.”<sup>12</sup>

### *Education and the Rise of the Universities*

**E***ducation in early medieval times.* From the fall of the Roman empire to the ninth century all education and learning were the monopoly of the Church. While secular classical learning was considered “unworthy of the attention of a good Christian,” the Church did realize that she had need of an educated clergy. Thus schools were maintained in most of the monasteries and later on in many of the cathedrals.

The old rhetoric schools of Rome had a curriculum of seven liberal arts, consisting of two divisions, a *trivium* of grammar, rhetoric, and dialectic and a *quadrivium* of arithmetic, music, geometry, and astronomy. Whereas Roman education had been designed to prepare youths for public life and to instill in

them a love of literature, art, and philosophy, church education was designed to prepare youths for ecclesiastical life and to instill in them a devotion to the Church and her creed. But the seven liberal arts were easily adapted. Grammar was of value in studying Latin, the language of the Church, and in developing a sound style. Rhetoric helped in interpreting the allegories of the Scriptures. Dialectic was chiefly logic and could be used to deduce truths from texts. Arithmetic was needed for computing the movable feast days, such as Easter, in the church calendar. Music was used in the singing of the liturgy. Geometry included the geography of the Holy Lands and heaven. Astronomy was largely neglected, although the Church taught that heaven and

earth were created in six days and that the stars were inferior to the earth. Thus, the *trivium* and *quadrivium* served the purposes of the Church.

**Monastic schools.** Throughout the early Middle Ages the chief centers of learning were the monasteries. While they had as their chief function the chanting of services and not the education of the people (throughout the entire Middle Ages only a very few people could read or write, and these were churchmen who were educated for a specific ecclesiastical purpose), the monastic schools nevertheless performed an invaluable service. As early as the fifth century education had made great progress in Ireland. The Benedictine monasteries became educational centers in the seventh and eighth centuries, producing such famous scholars as the venerable Bede in England.

**Cathedral schools.** In the eighth century there was a renaissance of culture because of the splendid work of Charlemagne. At his capital in Aix-la-Chapelle he established a palace school, placing the outstanding English scholar Alcuin in charge. The experiment, designed mainly to educate the sons of the nobility, did not continue after the death of its founder. Yet the type of school which Charlemagne established in connection with the cathedrals made advances. Cathedral schools were founded at Paris, Tours, Chartres, Orléans, Rheims, Canterbury, Toledo, and other cathedral towns. "During the eleventh and twelfth centuries the cathedral schools produced the greatest scholars of Europe, far surpassing the monastic schools, though many monks gave their whole lives to learning."<sup>13</sup> In the twelfth century the monastic orders, even including the reforming order of Cluny, which had been founded in 910 and had reached its height in the pontificate of Gregory VII, went into an intellectual decline. The new orders that sprang up in the twelfth century demanded a spiritual rather than an intellectual renaissance and stressed asceticism, not learning. Hence cathedral schools superseded those of the monasteries.

**The twelfth-century renaissance.** Meanwhile, the "renaissance of the twelfth century" brought students in great numbers to the schools. Western Europe was growing intellectually wealthier all the time. The Justinian Code, lost for six hundred years, had been rediscovered, stimulating the study of law. The

Church was emphasizing canon law more now than in earlier centuries, and the monastic and cathedral schools were not prepared to teach this study. Aristotle was becoming known, and his teachings affected logic, theology, and the sciences. Euclid's geometry and a new arithmetic based on Arabic numerals were coming into Europe via Arabic translations. The west was finding out what the Greeks had bequeathed to medicine. The impetus to learning was enormous—a learning which encompassed much more than theology or philosophy. The cathedral and monastic schools, with their limited curriculum of the seven liberal arts, were obviously not capable of teaching the new concepts in mathematics and logic or of coping with professional studies such as law, medicine, and theology. Another educational institution was required to meet the demands of the twelfth-century revival of learning. That institution was the university. The "intellectual revolution" was accompanied by an "institutional revolution."

**Origins of the universities.** The first universities began to take form in the twelfth century. The word "university" at one time stood for a guild or corporation of sorts. Thus there were universities of barbers, tanners, goldsmiths, and so on. When persons came together to study at a particular place—both students and teachers—they could be addressed as a *universitas*, because the university was at first a guild of learners, composed of teachers and students, patterned along lines similar to guilds of craft, composed of masters and apprentices. So we can say that in the thirteenth century there were only two requisites needed for a university—teachers and students. There were no buildings, campuses, endowments, or university organizations as we know them today.

In the beginning, universities were created by that love of learning which made men want to listen to some outstanding thinker. The whole procedure was informal and unofficial. Later, Popes and kings saw the possibilities of the new educational movement and granted charters which gave legal status to the universities and special rights to the students, such as freedom from military service and the jurisdiction of townspeople.

The two most famous medieval universities were at Bologna and Paris. The Italian university, Bologna, owed its growth to the fame

of the great teacher of civil law, Irnerius, who lectured on the *Digest*, as well as to the teaching of Gratian, whose *Decretum* systematized canon law. The French university grew out of the cathedral school of Notre Dame at Paris. This university became the most influential in medieval Europe.

**Bologna.** The University of Bologna was a paradise for undergraduates. The students organized the university as a means of protection against the rapacious townspeople, who had raised prices of foodstuffs and lodgings for those who flocked into the town to study under the masters of law. Since the individual student was helpless against such profiteering, organization was essential to bring the townspeople to terms. The students therefore threatened to depart as a body, something that could be done quite easily since the university possessed no permanent buildings at first. There is more than one case on record to show that universities did migrate on occasion.

The students not only ruled over the cowed townsmen but also managed to keep the professors under their control. For instance, in the earliest statutes (1317), we read:

"... that a professor might not be absent without leave, even a single day, and if he desired to leave town he had to make a deposit to insure his return. If he failed to secure an audience of five for a regular lecture, he was fined as if absent—a poor lecture indeed which could not secure five hearers! He must begin with the bell and quit within one minute after the next bell. He was not allowed to skip a chapter in his commentary or postpone a difficulty to the end of the hour, and he was obliged to cover ground systematically, so much in each specific term of the year. No one might spend the whole year on introduction and bibliography!"<sup>14</sup>

The students at Bologna were organized into two student guilds, the cismontane, composed of men from Italy, and the transmontane, composed of men from beyond the Alps. The student guilds controlled all academic matters save the granting of degrees, a prerogative which remained in the hands of the masters.

**Paris.** Conditions developed in an opposite fashion in Paris, the center of theology and hence the foremost in importance of all European universities. It is said that, when Abélard started teaching, thousands of students poured into Paris, overflowing the island in the Seine

and spreading along the left bank of the river, thereby creating (because of the language spoken) the Latin Quarter.

The youths who flocked to Paris were much younger than those who went to study law at Bologna, and the chancellor who had controlled the cathedral school never once allowed the students to take the law into their own hands. The power passed into the hands of the masters' guild, composed of the four faculties of arts, theology, law, and medicine.

**The collegiate system.** The poor lad who wanted an education and trudged weary miles from home to acquire it at Paris or some other university center labored under decided handicaps. There were fees to pay the instructor. Since only the wealthiest student could afford to buy a text (which had to be copied by hand), the poor student wrote on wax tablets. There were no dormitories; so students had to manage as best they could in cellars or garrets. Sometimes they pooled resources and lived on a cooperative basis.

Out of these meager beginnings arose the collegiate system. A philanthropic patron would donate quarters where indigent scholars might board free of charge. Such a patron was Robert de Sorbon, who endowed a hall at Paris for sixteen needy persons who were working for their doctorates in theology. Thus was founded in 1215 the famous Sorbonne, the oldest of academic colleges. As time elapsed, other colleges were created, not only in Paris but elsewhere, as in England, where the system became extremely popular. With the rise of the collegiate system these centers came to furnish instruction as well as residential quarters. In Oxford and Cambridge today the students live in colleges (Balliol, Magdalene), attend lectures, and make use of the college library. The university is made up of these colleges, and it is the university that confers the degrees.

**Papal regulation.** With the rise of universities came papal regulations. Innocent III, who had studied at Paris himself, defined the privileges and obligations of the embryonic theologians. Paris received its first code of regulations from him in 1215. A student had to be twenty years old before he could become a master of arts and thirty-five before he could teach theology. The master, who was required to keep a decent appearance, wore a clerical gown of dark color. Each student had to





*Henricus De Alemania delivers a lecture to a motley gathering at the University of Bologna. Evidently his words do not impress one student.*

attach himself to a master, who had the right to discipline him when necessary.<sup>15</sup>

**Student life.** Judging from contemporary accounts, the problem of discipline must often have loomed very large. Coulton's *Medieval Garner* recounts an Oxford brawl in 1238 in which the Pope's legate was attacked and nearly killed and his brother slain by an arrow by students who were afterward carried to London in tumbrils, cast into prison, excommunicated, and forced to walk barefoot through the streets and beg humbly for pardon. Members of Parliament in 1422 complained of the "manslaughters, murders, rapes, felonies, robberies, riots, conventicles, and other misdeeds" committed by Oxford students, to be sure—but by Irishmen attending the university, according to the English statesmen.

The largest part of student correspondence in any age is taken up with requests for money. The student had to pay fees, and he was always writing home to his father asking for more money for fees or rent. A doleful request from a scholar at Orléans ends, "Well-beloved father, to ease my debts contracted at the tavern, at the baker's, with the doctor and the bedells [beadles], and to pay my subscriptions to the laundress and the barber, I send you word of greetings and of money."<sup>16</sup> C. H. Haskins gives us further techniques which were used to soften a father's heart and loosen his purse-strings:

"If the father was close-fisted, there were special reasons to be urged: the town was dear

—as university towns always are!—the price of living was exceptionally high owing to a hard winter, a threatened siege, a failure of crops, or an unusual number of scholars; the last messenger had been robbed or had absconded with the money; the son could borrow no more of his fellows or of the Jews; he has been ill with the cold and tempted to run away; the cold is so great that he cannot study at night; and so on."<sup>17</sup>

The quiet, scholarly, and well-behaved student is seldom heard of in contemporary accounts for the reason that he was generally neither famous nor infamous enough to catch the chronicler's attention. But Chaucer's picture of the diligent Clerk of Oxford, who "looked holwe . . . and . . . thredbare," whose little money went for the purchasing of books on Aristotle, and who "gladly wolde . . . lerne, and gladly teche,"<sup>18</sup> shows that the most exemplary scholars also attended Paris and Oxford in the Middle Ages.

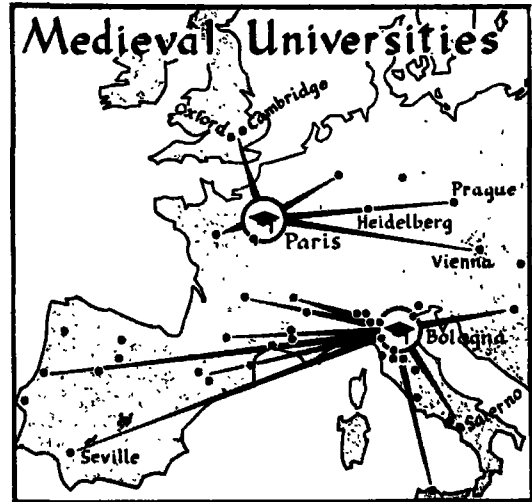
**An average day.** The average day of the medieval student was patterned much in this way: He attended as a rule only a class or two a day, but each might be three hours long. The first was at daybreak and might be devoted to a text of Aristotle. The student went into a bleak hall (provided that the university possessed its own buildings), very often without windows and unwarmed. Concern with physical comfort was frowned upon and commonly regarded as effeminate. The professor lectured from a platform, while the students sat on low benches. The only books were manuscripts. These consisted of costly parchment leaves bound together and very often inaccurately copied, which were rented out to those students rich enough to pay for such texts. Later, students bought their own books. After the first lecture, the scholars would have their first meal, at ten or eleven o'clock. Then came recreation, then a second lecture. Supper was at four or five o'clock. Until curfew the students engaged in social activities. Many did not study at night, being unable to afford candles. They had to converse in Latin in the colleges, under threat of punishment.

**Curriculum and degrees.** The value of a university degree was that it gave its owner the right to teach. However, the bachelor's degree was not considered important and could be obtained after studying the *trivium*

from three to five years. In order to gain his master's degree, the student spent almost as much time on the *quadrivium*, with particular emphasis on the works of Aristotle. Many scholars studied for a doctorate in one of the three great professions— theology, medicine, and law. To do this they read texts pertaining especially to their chosen profession. It was no easy matter to get a doctorate from a medieval university. At Paris the requirement for a doctor of theology was fourteen years of study, and when this time had elapsed, the candidate had to defend his thesis publicly for twelve hours. If successful in his defense, he then had to stand the expense of a banquet for the masters. But at last he "arrived" in his profession and had all the rights and privileges of teaching.

**The spread of universities.** The influence of Bologna and Paris was very marked in the creation of other university centers. The influence of Bologna was strong in Italy, southern France, and Spain. Paris became the model of a group of universities which were founded in Great Britain, Germany, northern France, and the Low Countries. Around 1200 there was a migration from Paris to Oxford, at that time an exceedingly small center of learning. A decade or two later, another group of students migrated from Oxford and founded Cambridge. The University of Prague was founded in 1347; Heidelberg (the first German university), in 1386. By the close of the Middle Ages Europe could boast of about seventy-five universities.

**The legacy of the medieval university.** Modern universities have large campuses, fine buildings, and wealthy endowments, while the medieval institution had none of these things. But the modern university resembles its venerable alma mater in its main reason for existence, the organization of institutions



of learning for the advancement of human knowledge and the training of each new generation of students. It has also received the idea of "a stated curriculum covering a fixed number of years, formal instruction, examinations, and degrees." The gowns and hoods which are to be seen every commencement day are the same kind of attire in which the medieval student was garbed and in the sleeves of which he would store his books or the food which he begged from indulgent townspeople. The college system at Oxford and Cambridge came from the creation of the Sorbonne and the collegiate system at Paris. Our subject matter is different from that of our medieval teachers, but our ideals and purpose are substantially the same.

"The two most essential functions which a true university has to perform . . . are to make possible a life of study, whether for a few years or during a whole career, and to bring together during that period face to face in living intercourse, teacher and teacher, teacher and student, student and student."<sup>19</sup>

## Medieval Literature

**The vernacular.** During the Middle Ages the intellectual growth of the western world was stimulated by the flowering of Latin and vernacular literatures. Though the first gradually died out, the second became richer and more universal in the succeeding centuries. Latin was the international language of the educated, who prayed, preached, sang, and wrote in this medium. But the great

majority of Europe's population neither spoke nor understood Latin. Their language was vernacular, that is, it pertained to a specific country or locality and was indeed their mother tongue. Therefore any literature written to appeal to the people had to make use of the language of their daily life.

There was a variety of vernacular tongues in use in medieval Europe. The Celtic group

of languages included various dialects of Welsh, Cornish, Breton, and Gaelic, the speech of the Celts of Ireland and the Scottish highlands. The Teutonic tongues were divided into three groups. The first was the eastern, or Gothic, and included the language of the Vandals and some other German tribes who had invaded the Roman empire. The second consisted of the northern, or Scandinavian, group. The third, or western, group was made up of High and Low German, Anglo-Saxon, Frisian, Dutch, and Flemish. High German is now the national speech of Germany. Low German is more closely related to Dutch and English. Germany's medieval literature was mainly composed in what is called Middle High German, the period of Old High German having ended about 1100.

Even in the days of Virgil and Cicero two distinct types of Latin were in daily use. The first, and most familiar to us, was the finished and polished product of the finest literary writers. The second was "vulgar Latin," the speech of the people. The two types had many easily distinguishable differences, of course, just as the colloquial speech of modern English differs markedly from formal English. In the provinces the tongue of the common people came to merge with the dialects of the barbarian tribes, and through this process the Romance languages of Italy, France, Portugal, and Spain developed. Dialects grew up in various districts. From the northern dialects in France modern French developed. The southern tongue, known as Provençal, eventually disappeared as a written language, although peasants in certain sections of southern France still speak it.

The literature composed in all these vernacular languages was transmitted orally at first, and sometimes centuries elapsed before it was written down, probably because the men who could read and write did so in Latin and looked with contempt upon literature written in any of the vulgar tongues. But vernacular literature sprang from the people themselves. Its flesh-and-blood quality was more vital and dynamic than the phraseology of the scholars, and so it was natural that by and large it should outstrip Latin literature. This is evident from the fact that the greatest of the medieval poets, Dante, Chaucer, and Villon, composed their greatest works in their vernacular tongues.

*Rivalry of Latin and vernacular literature.* The Latin tradition of law, language, and literature persisted into medieval times. The eleventh century witnessed the flowering of medieval Latin literature and the rise of its rival, the vernacular. This rivalry has been well expressed by Cesare Foligno of Oxford:

"The new languages were not the foes but became the rivals of Latin, and rivals more deadly than foes; for Latin survived as the language of learning, sometimes as the medium of emotional expression when the writer happened preëminently to be a man of learning; but as a rule it was a language into which the full breath of life was ceasing or had ceased to flow. It is a proof of the tremendous force of tradition that Latin should have survived so long. It would seem gallantly to have kept up a semblance of life until all the new languages had risen to literary rank. Yet one dare not mistake the semblance of life for life itself. Creative literature, the literature of poets in the etymological meaning of the word, found readier means of expression in the Germanic and Romance vernaculars."<sup>20</sup>

Latin retired into the schools, churches, and scriptoria of the learned, there to continue to serve as a language of culture and knowledge. Therein lies much of the strength of the Middle Ages, for Latin possessed a universality of expression which bound all scholarship and knowledge together, a situation we might do well to re-create today, confronted as we are by a plethora of tongues. Furthermore, medieval Latin, although criticized as bad and ungrammatical Latin, was in reality a language which coined new expressions and simplified its syntax in order to meet the demands of an ever-changing environment. While Foligno is correct in stating that the creative spirit of the age turned more and more to those languages which had sprung from the vitality of the people, Latin was still spirited enough to produce some excellent literature.

*Latin prose.* Medieval Latin prose embraced church and government documents, treatises on law and medicine, and essays on theology and dialectic. Histories of earlier periods, annals, chronicles, biographies, and hagiography (saints' lives) were also written in Latin prose.

One of the glories of Latin is its rich, sonorous tone, and even the formal documents

of the Middle Ages are enriched by the dignity and music of Latin phraseology. But undoubtedly the most splendid Latin of the Middle Ages is to be found in the liturgy of the Church, which was chanted rhythmically by the priest.

**Three periods of Latin poetry.** The Latin poetry of this age shows warmth and richness. The writing of Latin poetry experienced three periods of revival: the Carolingian (the most limited in scope), the eleventh and twelfth centuries, and the age of Petrarch (1304-1374). The poetry of Petrarch's time found itself in hopeless competition with the vernacular tongues. Thus, although Petrarch expected immortal fame from his Latin epic *Africa*, he won it through his Italian sonnets. However, the poetry of the second revival was full of vigor and new ideas. It is true that much of medieval Latin poetry was merely an imitation of ancient models, but contributions were made, especially in the lyrics of the university students and the new religious drama.

**Religious verse.** A great deal of the Latin poetry of the religious type—and there was a very large quantity of it—was mediocre in quality, but several new developments are worth mentioning. An interesting innovation was the introduction of rhyme. While much of the new rhymed verse was of the jingle variety, some of the effects achieved were excellent. The following lines, taken from a chorus chanted by pilgrims swinging along the dusty roads which led to Rome, are superbly sonorous:

O Roma nobilis, orbis et domina,  
Cunctarum urbium excellentissima,  
Roseo martyrum sanguine rubea,  
Albis et virginum liliis candida,  
Salutem dicimus tibi per omnia,  
Te benedicimus: salve per secula.<sup>21</sup>

The religious poetry of St. Bernard and Abélard and the writing of great hymns like the *Stabat Mater*, *De Contemptu Mundi*, and the *Dies Irae* show the genuineness of the religious spirit which permeated the medieval Latin sacred poetry.

**Goliardic literature.** Far different, however, was the spirit of secular poetry. Abélard, who could write sincere religious lyrics, could just as spontaneously give words to the most sensuous, satirical, and untrammelled thoughts. Nor was Abélard alone in this duality of spirit. A certain paganism pervades the youth in

every age, and the Middle Ages were no exception. The hard-worked young scholars who were one day to become priests, bishops, and even grave pontiffs needed an escape from their humdrum existence. And they found it—in town and gown riots, pranks against professors, parodies of the Mass, and a madcap literature that joyously proclaimed the pleasures of wine, women, and song.

One can never hope to appreciate the medieval spirit without taking full account of the student literature. It is known as Goliardic verse because the authors called themselves the disciples of Goliath—possibly Goliath the Philistine.

The spirit of these wandering scholars is admirably caught in "A Song of the Open Road":

We in our wandering,  
Blithesome and squandering,  
Tara, tantara, teinol!

Eat to satiety,  
Drink with propriety;  
Tara, tantara, teinol

Laugh till our sides we split,  
Rags on our hides we fit;  
Tara, tantara, teinol

Jesting eternally,  
Quaffing infernally:  
Tara, tantara, teinol

Craft's in the bone of us,  
Fear 'tis unknown of us:  
Tara, tantara, teinol!

When we're in neediness,  
Thieve we with greediness:  
Tara, tantara, teino!<sup>22</sup>

The chief center of the Goliardic poets was in northern France. They were primarily wandering students, and their two greatest poets were Hugh the Primate (about 1140), the deformed and impoverished canon of Orléans, and the Archpoet, whose poetry was written chiefly for Reinald, archbishop of Cologne about 1160. The Archpoet appears to have been of knightly origin and to have had a classical education. He used to solicit openly the bounty of the archbishop, maintaining in

the autumn that with winter's approach he had need of warm clothes or that the quality of his verse depended upon the quality of the wine which his patron gave him. His masterpiece is the *Confession of Goliath*. Addressed to his patron, the poet's request runs in part as follows:

Prelate, most discreet of priests,  
Grant me absolution!  
Dear's the death whereof I die,  
Sweet my dissolution;  
For my heart is wounded by  
Beauty's soft suffusion;  
All the girls I come not nigh,  
Mine are in illusion.

'Tis most arduous to make  
Nature's self-surrender;  
Seeing girls, to blush and be  
Purity's defender!  
We young men our longings ne'er  
Shall to stern law render,  
Or preserve our fancies from  
Bodies smooth and tender.

In the second place, I own  
To the vice of gaming:  
Cold indeed outside I seem,  
Yet my soul is flaming:  
But when once the dice-box hath  
Stripped me to my shaming,  
Make I songs and verses fit  
For the world's acclaiming.

In the third place, I will speak  
Of the tavern's pleasure;  
For I never found nor find  
There the least displeasure;  
Nor shall I find it till I greet  
Angels without measure,  
Singing requiems for the souls  
In eternal leisure.

In the public house to die  
Is my resolution;  
Let wine to my lips be nigh  
At life's dissolution:  
That will make the angels cry,  
With glad elocution,  
"Grant this toper, Go! on high,  
Grace and absolution!"<sup>23</sup>

The Goliardic poets were brilliant at satire and parody. Versed in classical mythology and possessed of the pagan spirit, they wrote Masses for toppers, substituted Venus for the Virgin, and performed other pagan blasphemies. But their satire often hit home, especially the parody called the *Gospel According to the Mark of Silver*, in which the venality of the Roman Curia becomes the object of biting scorn. Yet the disciples of Goliath could, and frequently did, pen verses of genuinely serious feeling.

**Vernacular epic poetry.** The growth of the vernacular Romance languages out of vulgar Latin, together with the growth in northern Europe of the Germanic languages, meant the inevitable emergence of vernacular literatures. The types of medieval vernacular literature are many and varied. Down to the thirteenth century poetry was the commonest means of expression, of which the epic was the earliest form. The Anglo-Saxon *Beowulf*, the German *Hildebrandslied*, and the Norse sagas show literary productiveness as early as the seventh and eighth centuries, that turbulent period almost devoid of Latin literature. Later, around the beginning of the thirteenth century, the German saga was recast into the *Song of the Nibelungs* (*Nibelungenlied*), the stirring tales of Siegfried, Brunhild, and the wars against the Huns, all immortalized in the nineteenth century by four music dramas of Richard Wagner called *Das Ring der Nibelungen*.

The German epic tradition was brought into the French vernacular literature, and in the eleventh and twelfth centuries arose the type of poetry known as *chansons de geste*, songs of heroic deeds, centered principally around Charlemagne and ascribing to him and his knights the chivalric code and religious fervor of the crusades. The most famous of these *chansons* is the *Song of Roland*, which sings of the deeds and death of Roland, Margrave of Brittany, in the Pyrenees while defending the rear of the Frankish army against the Moors.

Altogether some eighty epic *chansons de geste* were written around Charlemagne and his knights and were known as the Carolingian cycle. There were other popular cycles also. One was the great Arthurian cycle concerning the British King Arthur and his Round Table, taken principally from Irish,

Welsh, and Breton sources. A third epic cycle was the tale of Troy. In medieval times both the French and English looked upon themselves as direct descendants of the Trojans. Virgil's *Aeneid* was much more popular than Homer in the Middle Ages (though it is true that many could read Latin but few Greek).

**Lyric poetry.** In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, while the poets of northern France were creating the epic *chansons de geste*, the troubadours of southern France were singing a livelier lyric of great excellence and variety. The troubadours, often of noble birth, sang in the feudal courts of the south, and their poems, written in Provençal, dealt with fair and virtuous ladies and a formalized chivalric code of love. The troubadours were an interesting lot. At least half of them were either feudal lords or vassals, and they sang to an audience that was itself aristocratic, refined, and courtly. The first-known troubadour was William IX, Duke of Aquitaine (1071-1126), whose poetry deals with war, love, and numerous licentious and humorous topics.

The Provençal lyrics had intricate rhyme schemes and metrical patterns to fit the many types of subject matter. The *chanson* was an ordinary love song, the *salut d'amor* was composed as a love letter, the *sirventes* dealt with political and moral questions rather than love, the *tenso* debated questions of love, the *alba* warned lovers of the approach of dawn, and the *pastorela* recounted the wooing by the knight of the not over-shy shepherdess.<sup>24</sup>

Provençal poetry was dealt almost a death blow by the Albigensian crusade. But the spirit of the troubadours spread to other countries. In Germany love lyrics were sung by *minnesingers*, the most famous of these being Walther von der Vogelweide. In the thirteenth century courtly literature was further refined in France, where *courtoisie*, poetry in which warfare and chivalrous subjects were all used for the glorification of women, also developed. At the same time the old *chanson de geste* was transformed into the *romance*, a long tale filled with fair ladies, dragons, magicians, and talking animals.

**Allegory.** To the medieval penchant for parody and satire must be added the predilection for allegory. Ovid, Virgil, and the *Gesta Romanorum* (a series of fantastic tales supposedly based on antiquity) were sermonized and allegorized in order to appeal to the

medieval love for storytelling. Allegory reached perhaps its fullest development in the long-winded, elegant compendium known as the *Romance of the Rose*, a poem which influenced the early writings of Chaucer.

**Bourgeois poetry.** But the *chansons de geste*, Provençal lyrics, romances of the Arthurian type, and the *Romance of the Rose* were primarily for the chivalric aristocracy. The burgher was not overly interested in *courtoisie*; he preferred more practical and shrewd tales. His tastes were gratified in the *fabliaux*—bawdy stories often based on the double assumption that neither wives nor priests could ever be trusted. The bourgeoisie also appreciated fully the collection of animal stories known as the *Romance of Renard*. Renard the Fox is a sharp-witted, unscrupulous creature. The tales were particularly amusing to the burghers by virtue of their many rich parodies of the ideals of the *chanson de geste*.

**Literature of the common man.** Thus, we can see that a distinct literature was growing up to cater to both the aristocracy and the rising middle class. What of the common people and their literature? It was virtually nonexistent, for the simple reason that the peasants could not write. But there still developed a class of literature which found favor among the common people. The Robin Hood ballads of the fourteenth century disclose the social philosophy of robbing the rich to give to the poor. In the same century the remarkable *Vision of Piers Plowman* was written (probably by William Langland), condemning the injustices of a social system that had brought on the Peasants' Revolt of 1381. The author hurled the most trenchant accusations at an intolerant nobility and clergy and dared attack the feudal caste system.

**Geoffrey Chaucer (1340?-1400).** Chaucer is one of the greatest figures in medieval literature. His works, especially his *Canterbury Tales*, reveal a cross section of fourteenth-century English life, customs, and thought which cannot be obtained from a perusal of royal charters or laws. Chaucer was associated with the English court and had to travel in various official capacities to France and Italy. It is possible that he may have met Petrarch in Italy. At any rate, Chaucer came back from his foreign travels well versed in the subject matter and poetic techniques of French and Italian literature, and in his earlier writings

incorporated much of his foreign learning into his verse. His *Troilus and Creseide*, an outstanding piece of narrative verse, is modeled after a work of the contemporary Italian Boccaccio.

**The Canterbury Tales.** But the scene of his masterpiece, *Canterbury Tales*, is laid in England, the England of pilgrimages, pleasant countrysides, sleepy hamlets, and the jocund life of a wayfaring people still blessed with the freshness of living. The twenty-nine pilgrims who assembled in the Tabard Inn in April of the year 1387 were a motley group indeed. The "truly perfect, gentle knight," just back from warring against the "heathen in Turkey," was followed by his son, a young squire who loved so hotly by night that "he slept no more than does a nightingale." Then there was the prioress, coy, neat, and pretty—who "would weep if she but saw a mouse caught in a trap." The rotund monk loved to eat fat swan and to ride good horses. The merchant sat high on his horse and talked always of his profits. The friar knew all the best taverns and all the barmaids in town, but the Oxford student spent his money on books and wore a threadbare coat. The miller had a wart on his nose from which sprang a tuft of hairs "red as the bristles in an old sow's ears," and the doctor prescribed gold for the medicines of his patients. There was also the sailor who told disreputable stories and the rascal who sold pardons for sins and cheated people by substituting pig's for saint's bones and represented a pillow-case as being Our Lady's veil. One of the most delightful characters was the worthy wife of Bath, who had married five times and was now visiting the shrines throughout Christendom in search of husband number six. In a sympathetic manner Chaucer paints for us the character of the poor parson, a credit to his religion, who kept his parish alive spiritually. Likewise the English poet draws a favorable picture of the parson's brother, a plowman, who worked honestly and paid his tithes "fully, fairly, well."<sup>25</sup>

It would be hard to find a more vivid account of characters and situations than Chaucer's description in the Prologue to his *Tales*. An examination of the characters discloses the important fact that the poet, though in court circles himself, speaks of no aristocrat higher than the knight. His people are drawn from the ranks of the clergy and the middle

classes, seemingly indicating that Chaucer was well aware both of the importance of the Church and the rising strength of the bourgeoisie in fourteenth-century England.

A tremendous knowledge of the times can be gleaned from the works of this genius. In addition to the brilliance of humor and poetical description which have made the *Canterbury Tales* immortal, the reader learns of religious attitudes of the day, the sources from which Chaucer derived his plots, the prevailing belief in astrology, witchcraft, and relics, and the language of the period. But first and foremost Chaucer deserves fame as a brilliant storyteller.

**Significance of Chaucer.** Chaucer's use of the Midland dialect helped make it the language of future English literature, just as Dante's use of the Tuscan dialect fixed the Italian tongue. Secondly, Chaucer's use of "high comedy" has never been surpassed. He is always satirizing, but his humor and irony are gentle and sympathetic. Thirdly, because his humor does not preach and because he took such a wholehearted pleasure in the everyday realities of this life, Chaucer stands as a great forerunner of the English Renaissance. If Petrarch and Boccaccio are looked upon as poets of the Italian Renaissance, Chaucer may be regarded as occupying a similar position in the English Renaissance.

**Dante Alighieri.** Dante Alighieri (1265-1321) has been described as "the medieval synthesis." Exiled from his beloved Florence because of his differences with the papacy, Dante wrote *De Monarchia* to stress the divine importance of the Holy Roman Empire and its ruler. In his *De Vulgari Eloquentia* he defended the use of the vernacular tongue as a literary medium and also as the language needed for a united Italy. But Dante, patriot and innovator, brooded over ideas which had been born of his knowledge of Latin classics, his profound religious sense, his knowledge of the writings of Albertus Magnus, St. Thomas Aquinas, and Peter Lombard, and his appreciation of the mysticism of Dionysius and St. Bernard. The result was the *Divine Comedy*.

**The Divine Comedy.** The poem is divided into the *Inferno*, where those guilty of the seven deadly sins are forever punished; the *Purgatorio*, where Christians still having to perform penance dwell; and *Paradiso*, where the blessed live. Dante is led through the first

two regions by his teacher Virgil, but since the latter is a pagan, Beatrice, the symbol of divine love, guides him through Paradise. Herein Dante shows his allegiance to medieval ideology. Dante was scholar and poet, a rare combination. Both sides of the writer are evident in the *Divine Comedy*. Dante's magnificent descriptive powers are shown in this vivid picture of Lucifer:

Oh, what a marvel it appeared to me,  
When I beheld three faces on his head!  
The one in front, and that vermilion was;  
Two were the others, that were joined with  
this  
Above the middle part of either shoulder,  
And they were joined together at the crest;  
And the right-hand one seemed 'twixt white  
and yellow;  
The left was such to look upon as those  
Who come from where the Nile falls valley-  
ward.  
Underneath each came forth two mighty wings,  
Such as befitting were so great a bird;  
Sails of the sea I never saw so large.  
No feathers had they, but as of a bat  
Their fashion was; and he was waving them,  
So that three winds proceeded forth there-  
from.  
Thereby Cocytus wholly was congealed.  
With six eyes did he weep, and down three  
chins  
Trickled the tear-drops and the bloody  
drivel.  
At every mouth he with his teeth was crunch-  
ing  
A sinner, in the manner of a brake,  
So that he three of them tormented thus.  
To him in front the biting was as naught  
Unto the clawing, for sometimes the spine  
Utterly stripped of all the skin remained.<sup>20</sup>

**The drama.** Another medieval contribution was to the drama. Out of the choral singing of sacred stories in early times developed the medieval religious plays called mysteries, whose themes dealt with Biblical stories and the lives of the saints. The drama proved of great educational value to men who could not read. The most important festivals in the church calendar, especially Christmas and Easter, lent themselves to a vivid presentation of the stories involved, stories which were beloved and revered.

Other popular themes from the Bible were in time added, and actors rigged out in the medieval conception of Holy Land costume would delight the awe-struck audience with such plays as *The Ten Virgins*, *The Raising of Lazarus*, *Adam*, and *Daniel*. At first the plays merely supplemented the regular service and were performed in Latin inside the church proper. With their growth in popularity and originality (many interesting and even profane touches were added by thespians for the delight of their "public") the plays began to be presented either in the church porch or on a separate stage built for the occasion. It came to be the custom to add vernacular phrases to the text, a practice which must have delighted the audience.

In the medieval drama we find some astonishing situations. Like the irreverent verses of the students in the midst of pious Latin poetry, in the midst of serious liturgical drama there came to be a group of irreverent revels. The Feast of the Circumcision (January 1) was presided over by the subdeacons. The custom of celebrating the feast was called the Feast of Fools because of the strange license employed by the subdeacons. While the form of the Mass was retained, interpolation was made in the text, an outlandish ceremonial was included such as a drinking bout, the bringing of an ass into the church at the singing of the Prose of the Ass, and the concluding of various pieces of the liturgy with a bray. The revels of the choir boys on Innocents' Day proved a humorous addition to the drama. On that occasion the choir boys would flout their elders, elect a boy bishop who acted as a ludicrous substitute for the true bishop, and perform in pantomime the Flight into Egypt. Armed men would go through the church seeking Mary and Jesus: they would find the pair (a cleric dressed as a woman holding a baby) sitting on an ass, and then another cleric impersonating Joseph would lead the animal through the church.

**Mystery and morality plays.** As the drama ceased to have a direct connection with the church service, a type of play known as the morality play developed. The morality play was the allegory in drama. The actors personified virtues and vices, and the plot of the drama usually centered around a conflict between them. *Everyman* is the best-known morality play. The morality plays were not so





ST. APPOLLINARE, EARLY CHRISTIAN BASILICA AT RAVENNA

closely bound up with religion as were the mystery plays, although they often had a religious tinge. The mysteries were based on

Bible stories, whereas the moralities had allegorical plots, sometimes of religious significance and sometimes not.

### *Medieval Art*

**The cathedral in the Middle Ages.** The *Summa theologiae* of St. Thomas Aquinas, the learning of Paris, and the *Divine Comedy* are the intellectual expressions of the medieval spirit which manifested itself outwardly in the Gothic cathedral. These works reveal the continual attempt on the part of medieval people to unify all learning according to a definite theological plan to the end that God might be glorified and man saved. Perhaps the most successful of all was the Gothic cathedral. The artists of the Middle Ages evolved a distinctive style of building—as distinctive and appropriate as the skyscraper in our Age of Steel.

**Early medieval churches.** The early Christians had used catacombs for their religious services. Later, when they could worship openly, they held their services in Roman buildings. Therefore, when they began building, they imitated the Roman basilica, a rectangle divided into three aisles: a central aisle, or nave, ending in a semicircular apse, and two lower side aisles set off by two arcades of semicircular arches. Wood was generally used for the roof. St. Appollinare at Ravenna (pictured above) shows the apse, decorated with mosaics, the three-aisle construction, and the typical wooden roof. The higher middle aisle allowed clerestory windows (com-

pare with the construction of the temple of Karnak in Egypt centuries earlier, page 45).

The Carolingian revival modified the true basilica plan. A transverse aisle called the transept, which extended beyond the side aisles, was added between apse and nave. This gave the church the form of a cross, adding to the symbolism of the structure (though the best-known building of the Carolingian period, perhaps, was the octagonal-shaped cathedral at Aachen). Occasionally the Carolingian builders erected towers, but these graceful additions did not become universal until later. Carolingian buildings were generally constructed of wood, and in the disorders of the ninth and tenth centuries most were destroyed.

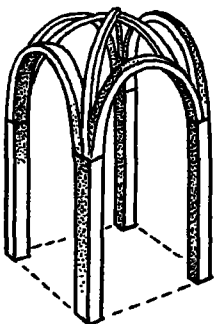
**Romanesque architecture.** In the eleventh century, however, a tremendous architectural revival took place, and in the years 1000-1150 the characteristic features of Romanesque architecture evolved. This revival was largely due to the building program of the Cluniac monks. The characteristics of Romanesque architecture differ greatly according to locality. In France they varied stylistically from the classic in the south to the strongly Byzantine in the center. But the round arch and barrel and groined vaulting appeared throughout. The Romans had made use of stone roofing in the form of a heavy barrel vault, together with the groined vault (see diagram below). Thus the Romanesque style of architecture took

from the Romans the basilica plan and the Roman vaulting methods. Although Italy built some early vaulted churches, the full development of Romanesque vaulting came in the north, where lighting was more important. Romanesque churches, such as St. Sernin, illustrated below, were heavy, thick-walled, and dimly lighted. They tended to be solid and gloomy. The builders did not solve the problem of how to have many windows yet strong walls. The vaults were so constructed that heavy outside walls had to support the thrust of the nave vaults. The problem was finally solved by the Gothic builders.

**Romanesque sculpture.** Romanesque sculpture, like Romanesque architecture, varied according to locality. In the south of France, classic remains influenced such works as the portals of St. Gilles, page 384. This can be seen in the classic decorative motifs, the columns, and the general composition. Note the classic "Greek key" motif above the columns, and compare the decorative foliage with Roman decoration on Trajan's forum, page 173. Almost all Romanesque sculpture was used for architectural purposes.

The Cluniac center in Burgundy produced some of the most beautiful Romanesque sculp-

**THE GROINED VAULT** as used by Romanesque builders developed out of the principles involved in the Roman intersecting vaults (see page 169). Arches span the



sides of a square, and longer arches span the same square diagonally, concentrating the weight on the four corner piers.

The spaces between the arches are filled with rubble or bricks.

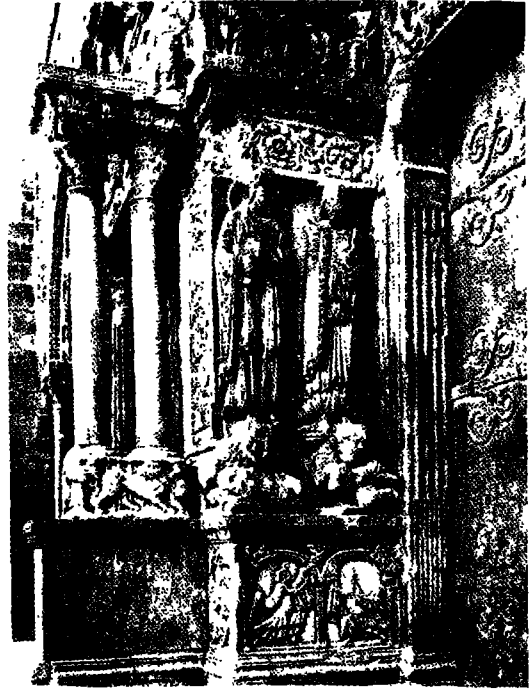


INTERIOR OF ST. SERVIN, TOULOUSE, FRANCE



CLUNY CAPITAL, THIRD TONE PLAIN SONG

ture. Little of this work remains, since the large abbey church was blown up in the nineteenth century by profiteers who wanted the stone, but the capitals of the sanctuary still exist. The figures representing the musical tones are skillfully composed and vigorous in conception. The fact that musical subjects



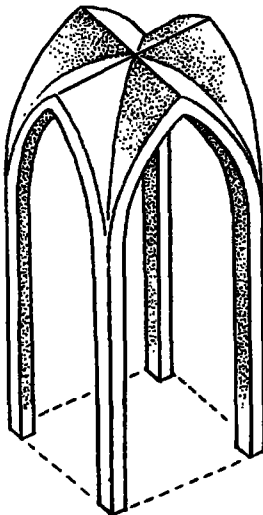
ABBAY CHURCH EXTERIOR, ST. GILLES

were used in the sanctuary of the church shows the importance of this art in the Church.

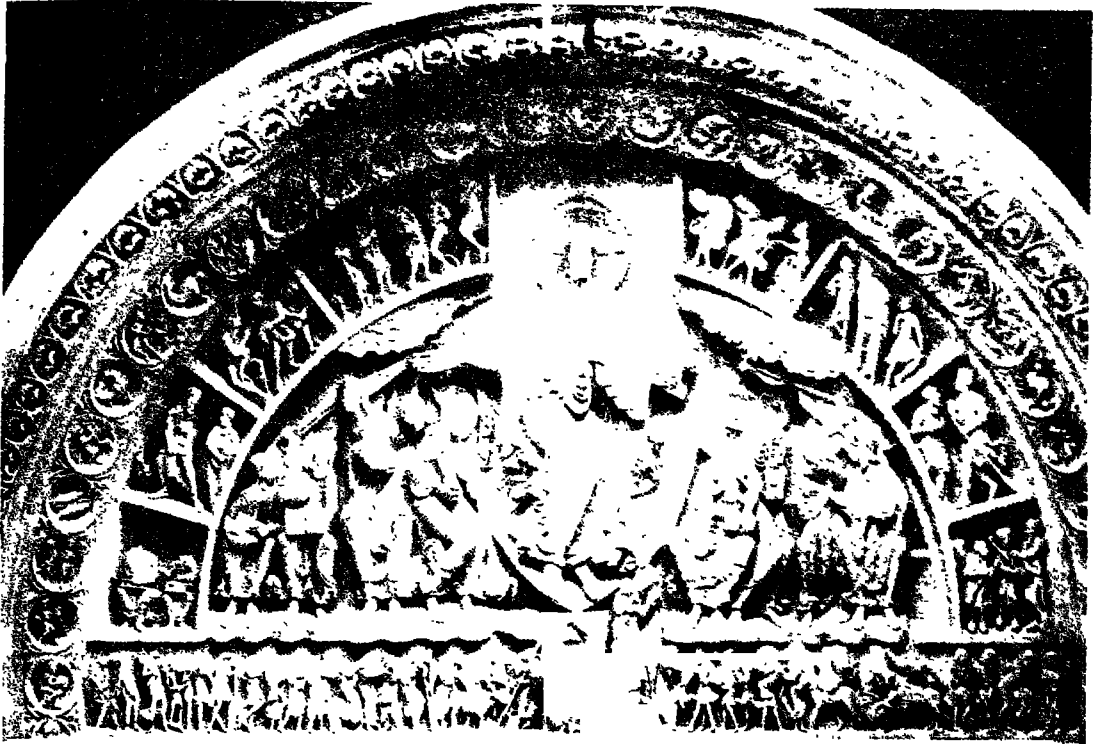
The tympanum over the door at Vézelay (see next page) is an example of sculpture in which the Byzantine influence is strong. Comparison of this low relief with the ivory throne (page 230) will reveal how the later sculptors were influenced by the ivories of Byzantium. This panel was composed so as to fit as many religious stories as possible into the given space. The sculpture on a cathedral was the library of the ordinary man, and through it he learned the stories in the Bible.

**Gothic architecture.** There is no clearcut cleavage between Romanesque and Gothic. It was a gradual evolutionary process which culminated in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. (The term "Gothic" was contemptuously given by Renaissance enthusiasts, who used it to mean "barbarian.") In the Gothic cathedral the pointed arch was developed (see diagram). This produced a level-top vault and allowed the thrust to be carried on ribs. By clustering small columns around a larger one with one small column carrying each rib, the weight was carried down to the ground. Compare the diagram at the left with the picture of the nave of Amiens cathedral, page 386.

**THE POINTED ARCH**, *originally used by the Persians, is easier to build than the round arch and exerts less sidewise thrust, since its curve is more nearly vertical.*



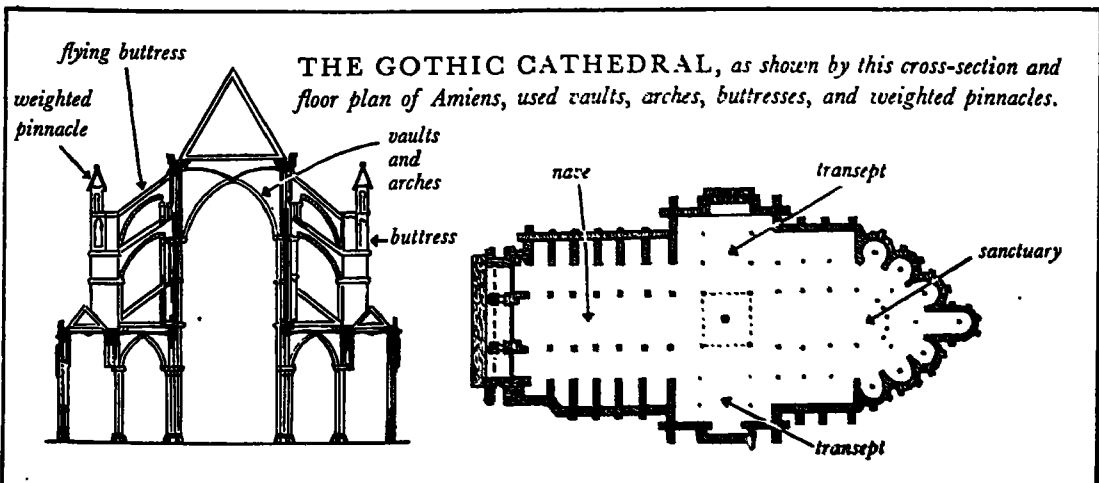
*Pointed arches, when combined as shown here, produce vaults with slender supporting piers. With these vaults Gothic builders constructed the stone skeleton of their cathedrals.*



TYMPANUM OVER THE DOOR OF THE CATHEDRAL AT VÉZELAY, FRANCE: CHRIST IN MAJESTY

Whereas Romanesque builders had had to make thick walls with a minimum of windows to bear the weight of the roof, in the Gothic ribbed vaulting the small sections of masonry carrying the thrust of the roof arches were supported by flying buttresses on the outside and by the weight of pinnacles (as the view of Notre Dame, Paris, page 386, shows).

The important principles of the concentration of thrusts and counter-thrusts had been worked out, and the essential frame of the Gothic structure was a self-supporting, strain-distributed edifice. Walls could now be cut into almost anywhere, and great areas were free to be filled with exquisite stained-glass windows.

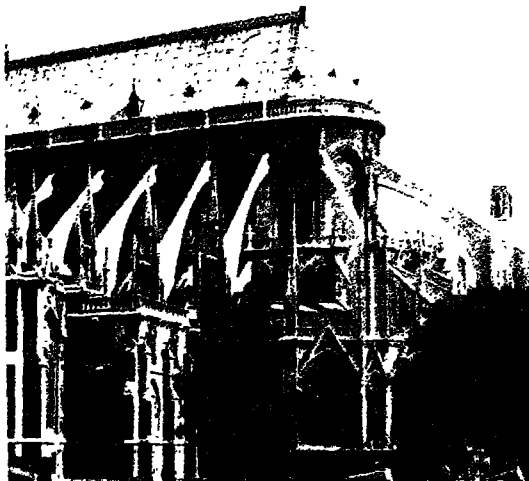




THE NAVE, AMIENS CATHEDRAL

The Gothic cathedral was a frank expression of small-stone construction and the ultimate development of the arch principle. The plan of the edifice was likewise an expression of its function, with its large nave separated from the priest's sanctuary by the transepts and by its ambulatory for processions. (Study the diagram at the bottom of the previous page.)

Gothic features were not confined to cathedrals, although the church was the most characteristic structure of the period. The monastery at Mont St. Michel, on a rock off the north coast of France, has many Gothic features. On page 388 is shown the double arcade of Gothic arches which formed the cloister of the monastery. Gothic features were also used in

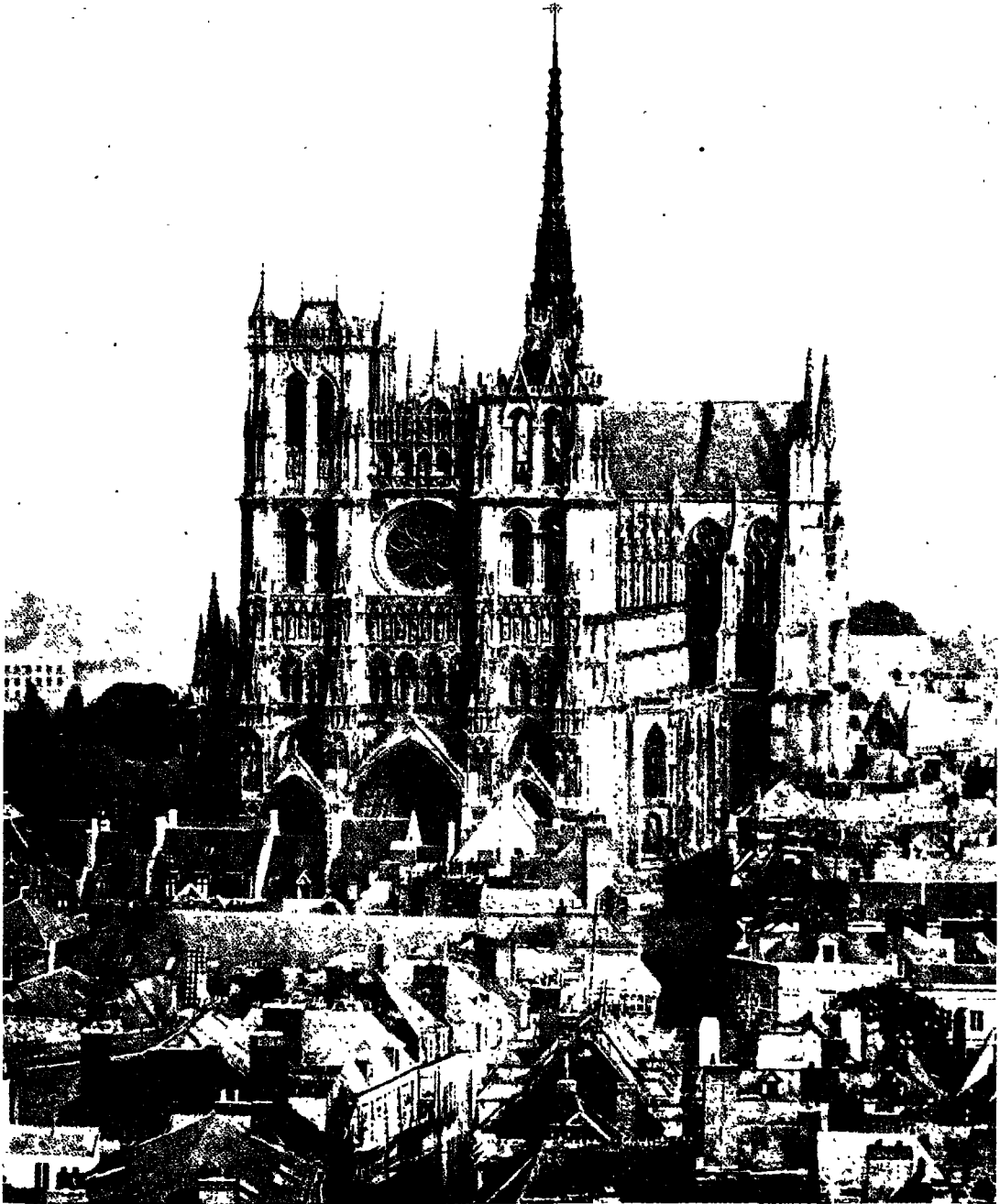


FLYING BUTTRESSES AND PINNACLES, NOTRE DAME, PARIS

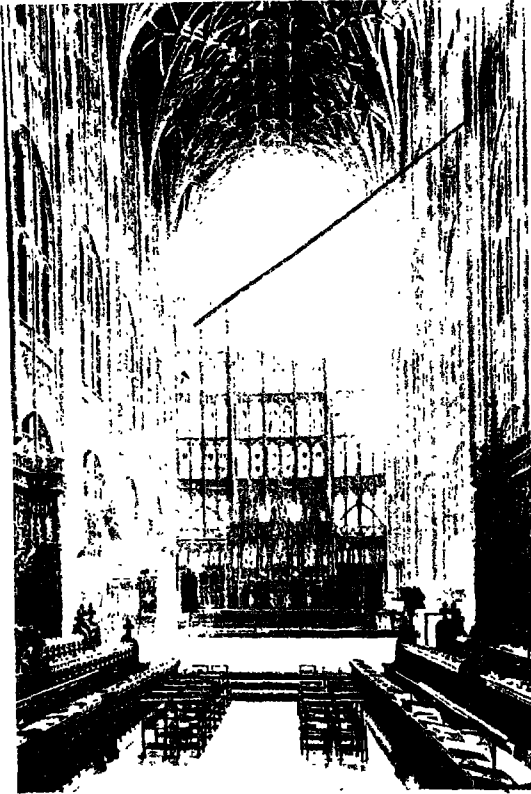
town halls and other secular buildings, as we shall see.

The thirteenth-century architecture was Gothic at its best, and the finest examples are to be found in France. Great cathedrals like Notre Dame of Paris, Amiens, and Chartres are expressions of both the religious feeling and the structural knowledge of the times. Soaring in strength and elasticity, their west portals crowned by two towers, their interiors softened into shadow and colored tints through beautiful stained glass, these cathedrals are the epitome of the Middle Ages.

**Regional differences.** In England there were differences in plan and size. The English imported the French style and modified it to fit their particular needs, and they built larger choirs than did the French. Their original contribution to Gothic was the perpendicular style, with vertical stonework in the windows and complicated lierne and fan vaulting, an exaggeration of a structural feature for decorative purposes. Note the choir of Gloucester cathedral (page 388) in the foreground of the illustration, and the perpendicular decoration. Compare the straight tracery in the windows with that which can be seen on Amiens, page 387. The roof of Gloucester is covered in the lierne vaulting. The parish church was also a typical English structure. It was a smaller, more intimate adaptation of the Gothic style.



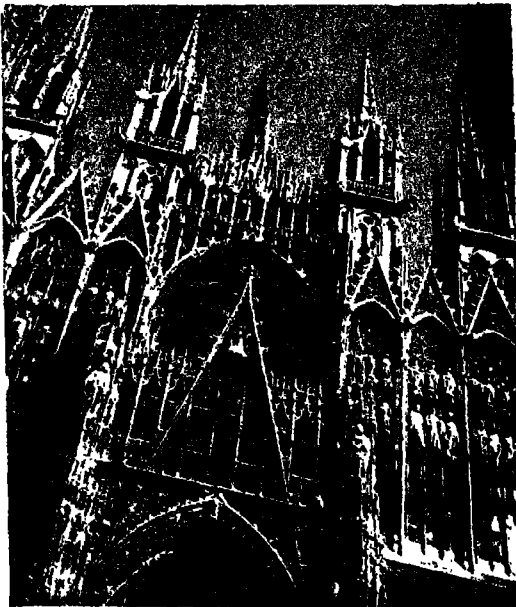
*The spire of Amiens, rising out of clustered dwellings to dominate the town, the countryside in fact, breathes the spirit of the Middle Ages. A typical French cathedral, its unmatched towers are proof of the long years spent in its building. Amiens is also typically Gothic with its triple doors, Gothic archings, its plan forming a cross, the sculptural decoration of saints across the façade, and the round rose window dedicated to Our Lady.*



INTERIOR OF GLOUCESTER CATHEDRAL



CLOISTER OF THE ABBEY, MONT ST. MICHEL



THE CATHEDRAL AT ROUEN

While the finest Gothic architecture is in France and England, the Spanish cathedrals at Salamanca, Segovia, and Seville are Gothic in style and structure. Distinguishing features of Spanish Gothic are the inclosed choir and the Moorish influence in decoration. Except for the cathedral at Cologne, German Gothic is lacking in France's richness of expression. Much of the Gothic in Germany is greatly influenced by the French style. Italy never took kindly to Gothic, preferring to follow classic traditions and viewing with displeasure the use of great windows, which might be of value in northern climates, but which were drawbacks in Italy. Instead of specializing in stained-glass windows the Italian artists decorated the large wall spaces with murals. Thus geography influenced the arts.

*Decorative features.* Most of the decorative features of Gothic cathedrals developed from structural or functional beginnings. Thus the tower developed into a decorative feature from the need to place the bells in an openwork

structure high enough to sound over the countryside. The pinnacles were used to add weight to the buttresses and later were decorated. The tracery of the windows developed from the original pure structural stone-work to hold the glass, to highly decorative flamboyant tracery.

Gothic art at its best was simple and even ascetic, just as the ideal of spiritual life of the Middle Ages was simplicity and asceticism. In the thirteenth century Gothic architecture reached its apex. Its builders had achieved technical mastery but still believed in simplicity of expression and sincerity of purpose. Their successors wanted to improve on their accomplishments, but their attempts were marred by exaggeration. Cathedrals were covered with unnecessary details, as in the case of Rouen with its flamboyant façade, or they were erected to heights beyond the point of practicality and sometimes came tumbling down. The illustration of Rouen on the opposite page shows how the once purely structural features (pinnacles, gargoyles, tracery, and so on) were used to produce a mass of decoration.

**Gothic building and medieval life.** The Romanesque church had been built largely by the monastic houses. The Gothic cathedral in France, however, was the creation of the townsmen and bishops. They united in erecting a structure which should at once eclipse the cathedral of a rival town and also express the fervor of their devotion. So the church was built in the center of the town, rising majestically above the low-lying homes of its builders—the social and religious center of all the people.

The archbishop of Rouen wrote to a friend when a French cathedral was in the process of building:

"Who has ever seen? Who has ever heard tell, in times past, that powerful princes of the world, that men brought up in honors and in wealth, that nobles, men and women, have bent their proud and haughty necks to the harness of carts, and that, like beasts of burden, they have dragged to the abode of Christ, these wagons, loaded with wines, grains, oil, stone, timber, and all that is necessary for the construction of a church? . . . They march in such silence that not a murmur is heard. . . . When they halt on the road nothing is heard but confession of sins, and pure and suppliant

prayer. . . . When they have reached the church they arrange the wagons about it like a spiritual camp, and during the whole night they celebrate the watch by hymns and canticles. On each wagon they light tapers."<sup>27</sup>

The magnitude of the task of building these huge edifices meant that decades were required to complete a cathedral. Notre Dame at Paris was begun in 1163 but not finished until 1235, while the cathedral at Canterbury took four centuries to build and represents three successive styles.

**Gothic sculpture.** With the building of the cathedrals grew the arts which were to decorate them. Thirteenth-century Gothic sculpture, as well as the glass of the period, stayed well within the technical limitations and respected its place as a part of one large composition. The central door at Chartres (below) is an excellent example of Gothic architectural sculpture, with the figures distorted in length to fit the door jambs and depicted in a symbolic rather than personal manner. Compare the figures with those of the tympanum at Vézelay (page 385), to see how the use of stylization in the folds of garments remained and was exaggerated at Chartres to emphasize length.

Gothic sculpture gradually developed along more and more realistic and individualized



DETAIL OF CENTRAL DOOR, CHARTRES CATHEDRAL





DECORATIVE SCULPTURE AT CENTRAL DOOR,  
AMIENS



CLAUS SLUTER: "THE FOUNTAIN OF MOSES," DETAIL

lines. The sculptured figures on the central door at Amiens (left) show an interest in the individual that is absent in the Chartres figures, but the sculptor still respected the architectural setting. Eventually Gothic sculpture became very realistic, like that of Claus Sluter in his *Fountain of Moses*. Here the saints are faithful depictions of human types, and there is more interest in their personalities than in the whole composition.

**Painting.** The early Christian paintings on the walls of the catacombs were not really much influenced by Roman painting. Compare the painting "Adam and Eve" (below), a Christian subject, with the pagan subject "Perseus and Andromeda" (page 173). Later, when churches were built, they were decorated with costly and impressive mosaics and Byzantine icons. Mural painting did not appear again until the thirteenth century in Italy. The northern Gothic cathedral did not provide much wall space for painting, other than purely ornamental work on columns and piers.

However, painting was stimulated considerably by the brilliant use of illustration in the adorning of manuscripts. There were no printing facilities in the Middle Ages, and all books had to be copied by hand. The scribes who performed the task were often artists of great ability who took special pride and care in



EARLY CHRISTIAN CATACOMB PAINTING: ADAM  
AND EVE

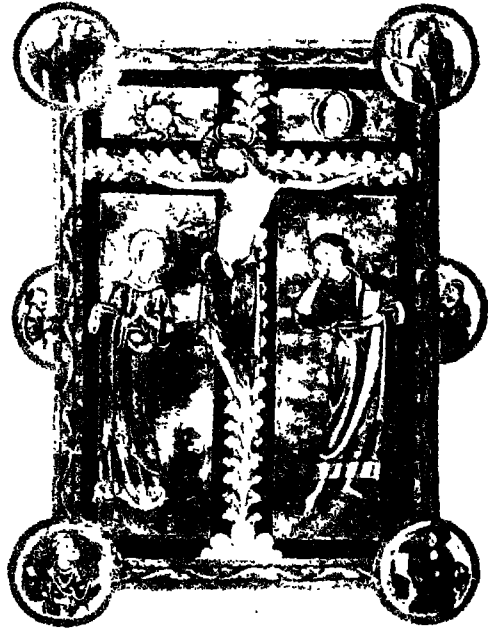
fashioning beautifully proportioned letters and enriching the page with exquisite miniature pictures. These illuminated manuscripts (the term is aptly used, for the pages were covered with gold and brilliant color) were psalters and other religious texts. Byzantine stylization and brilliance of color are apparent in these paintings. Illuminations were done in tempera colors, often with gold backgrounds.

**Gothic symbolism.** One of the most interesting aspects of the Gothic cathedral is its extraordinary symbolism. In addition to religious symbols, animals and flowers appear in the edifice. Statues were erected to the *trivium* and the *quadrivium*, and next to each of the seven figures was often placed a figure of some thinker associated with its progress—geometry and Euclid, astronomy and Ptolemy, and so on. There were also statues of philosophy, the sciences, astrology and alchemy, and architecture and painting. In the French cathedrals were also symbolized the messages of the Old and New Testaments, the great men of antiquity, the history of France, and the surpassing love of the Virgin.

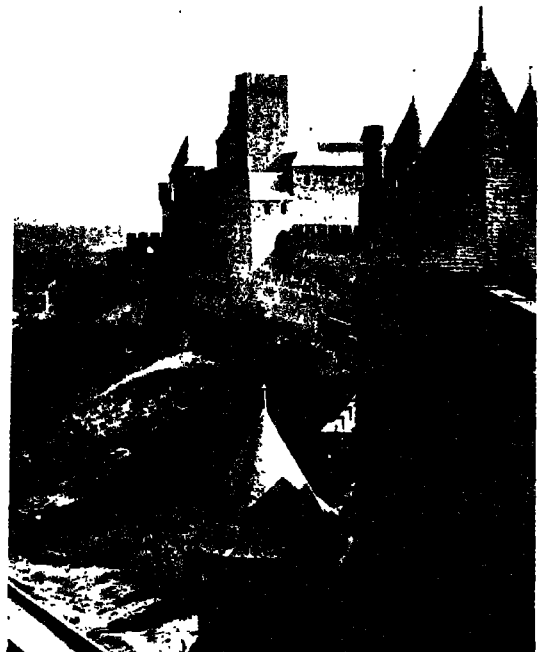
Henry Adams in *Mont-Saint-Michel and Chartres* points out that with few exceptions the French cathedrals were dedicated expressly to Our Lady—Notre Dame de Paris, Notre Dame de Chartres, Notre Dame de Rouen, and so on.<sup>29</sup> God the Father was stern and vengeful; God the Son was far removed from this earth; God the Holy Ghost was scarcely understood. But Mary the Mother, who had undergone the joys and tribulations of any other mother, was always present to intercede for saint and sinner alike. Thus arose that interesting phenomenon of the Middle Ages, Mariolatry, the worship of the Virgin, whose popularity for a time overshadowed that of the Trinity.

The Gothic cathedral was a place where the medieval craftsman could express his feelings without fear or restraint, within the limits of the general plan. While statues of saints and martyrs expressed his reverence, figures of devils in the form of gargoyles were a sort of goliardic touch. A gargoyle's purpose was to carry water clear of the masonry. Some can be seen projecting from the towers on Rouen cathedral (page 388).

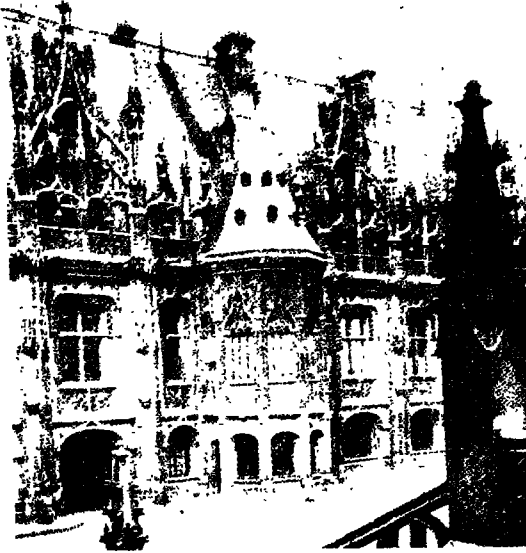
**Secular architecture.** Secular architecture developed considerably during the Middle



MANUSCRIPT ILLUMINATION, PSALTER OF THE ABBOT OF PETERBOROUGH



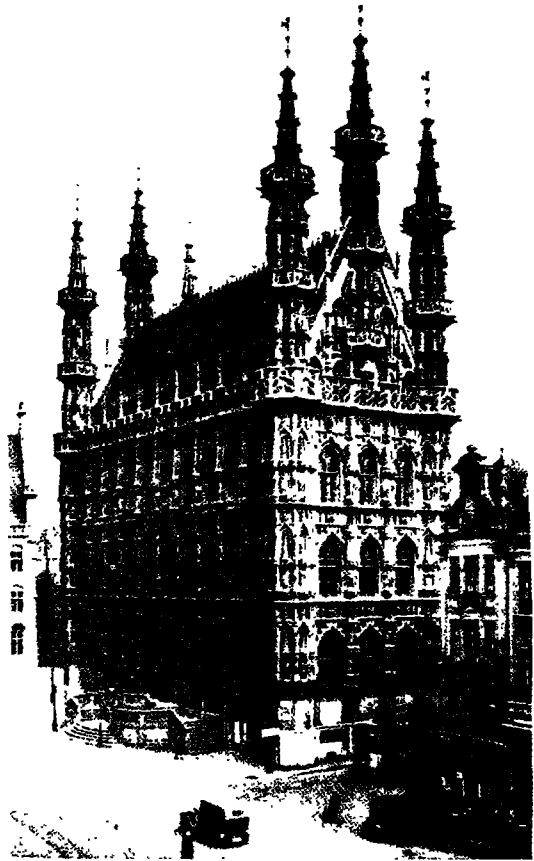
MEDIEVAL CASTLE AND WALL, CARCASSONNE



PALACE OF JUSTICE, ROUEN

Ages, because of the exigencies of the feudal way of living. What the cathedral was to religious life, the castle was to everyday living. Both were havens, and both were built to endure. Development of better methods and machines of siege necessitated more massive castles. By the thirteenth century castle building in Europe reached a high point of development. The towers were rounded, and bastions stood at strategic points along the walls, while the walls themselves were constructed in such a skillful manner that if one section should be taken by attackers it could be isolated from the remaining fortifications and was itself open to strong counterattack from the defenders. So skillfully was the castle of the later Middle Ages constructed that the besiegers had to use all their tactical ingenuity. Whole towns were fortified in the same way, with walls, watch towers, moats, and drawbridges. Carcassonne, still standing, is a dramatic example of the medieval fortified town (page 391). Notice its situation on a hill, the many towers, and the loopholes for archers.

The growth of towns and the rise of the bourgeoisie also stimulated the development of secular architecture. Toward the end of the Middle Ages there was less need for fortified towns and castles. Town and guild halls, the residences of the wealthy classes, and the



THE TOWN HALL OF LOUVAIN

chateaux of nobles used Gothic decorative features. The Palace of Justice at Rouen has decorated pinnacles and decorative tracery on the windows, taken from Gothic church architecture. In the Low Countries the burghers of the flourishing centers of trade and industry began to construct civic buildings, whose size and richness reflected the growing wealth of the Flemish towns. The town hall of Louvain shows the typically Flemish steep roof and the rich decoration used by Flemish builders.

These secular buildings were hung with large tapestries, presumably to help keep the damp of the walls from the room. The early tapestries are patterned in a decorative manner, with little perspective and conventionalized drawing, as in "The Giving of the Roses," page 393. The shading of the figures is slight and stylized, owing to the difficulty of producing subtle gradations in the weaving.



THE GIVING OF THE ROSES (FRENCH BURGUNDIAN TAPESTRY)

The decorative flower patterns are typical of early Gothic tapestries.

In Italy civic buildings were also erected. Italian town halls were more massive than those in the north, and most of them were capable of being defended. This feature, coupled with the bell tower for ringing alarms, reflects the insecurity of Italian life at that time. The picture on page 445 shows a fortified town hall in the right background and a bell tower at the left.

**Stained glass.** The making of stained-glass windows was one of the finest medieval arts, one whose excellence we have not duplicated today. Thirteenth-century craftsmen colored the glass in a molten state by adding minerals. Thus the glass was stained, not painted, and was very bright. Details such as hair were painted on later in a very conventionalized manner. This technique was superior to later innovations in which the color was painted on the surface of the glass. The glass of the thirteenth century was fitted as small pieces into patterns held together by leads, with large iron rods crossing the windows to support



*A medieval glazier joins small pieces of colored glass with strips of lead to make a large window, using putty or cement to fill in the chinks.*



DETAIL OF STAINED-GLASS WINDOW, CHARTRES

them. In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries both the leads of the individual pieces and the iron rods were used to emphasize the design. In the Chartres window on this page notice the use of the leads on the cloak and arm of the left-hand figure.

An interesting feature of many of the windows is the addition of portraits of the donors at the bottom of religious scenes. Often guilds financed windows, and their activities thus portrayed reveal many customs of the day.

The art of making stained glass died out almost completely after the sixteenth century. During the intervening years a lowering of quality came about through the use of large plates of painted glass with the leads arranged in mechanical squares and figures painted on in third dimension, although the decoration, with the light pouring through it, obviously called for flat patterns of color.

### Summary

Medieval philosophy was constrained by authority and confined to justifying the creeds, dogmas, and faith of the Church. The process of justification was known as Scholasticism. One of the major problems of medieval philosophy centered about the question of universal Ideas. The Realists, headed by such men as Anselm of Canterbury, believed that these Ideas alone constituted true reality; to the Nominalists, on the other hand, these Ideas were simply names (*nomina*). A compromise was reached in Conceptualism, generally credited to Abélard, who said that, while universal terms have no objective existence as such, particular objects may have similarities which enable us to obtain a mental picture, or concept, of them as a class. The Church inclined toward Realism, with its emphasis upon authority; the new science, aided by Roger Bacon and others, believed in Nominalism because of its stress upon the individual approach and freedom from tradition.

In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries Europe received from Arabic sources not only new scientific discoveries but, more important, the philosophical treatises of Aristotle. Scholasticism attempted to reconcile the new sciences, the new-found Greek philosophy, and the church theology. Great encyclopedias were written, called *summa* (summaries). The most famous Scholastics were St. Albertus Magnus and St. Thomas Aquinas, the latter's *Summa Theologiae* constituting a herculean attempt to reconcile reason and faith, Christianity and paganism, authority and Aristotle, and science and theology. Yet medieval philosophy, despite its failure to affect most modern men, had an admirable ideal, the unification of all knowledge into a logical system of thought.

While theology was of the most importance, some real advances were made in science. The lack of proper techniques and the inductive method of experimentation were serious handicaps, as was the frowning of the Church upon any concern with worldly problems.

The contributions of the Greeks and Arabs which became known in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries enlarged European knowledge. Mathematics was enriched by the addition of Arabic numerals, algebra, Euclid's geometry, and trigonometry. Geography and navigation were making slow but sure progress as a result of increased travel and trade as well as the gradual acceptance of the magnetic compass. Alchemy produced many important chemical by-products, while the Arabs' contributions in drugs proved invaluable. Medicine and surgery advanced through the schools founded at Salerno and Bologna, where anatomy, the use of anesthetic, and the value of bathing in mineral waters were understood. Leprosy was all but eliminated in the Middle Ages, and public health advanced with the increasing use of quarantines.

Perhaps the greatest medieval contribution was the university. The Church monopolized education through the Middle Ages. As learning was revived in the twelfth century, it became increasingly obvious that the monastic and cathedral schools could no longer educate the youth in such specialized studies as law and medicine. The curriculum in the new universities consisted of other subjects besides those taught in the *trivium* and *quadrivium*. The universities grew out of the flocking of students to hear some outstanding teacher, and they possessed no buildings or campuses at first. At Bologna the students were largely in charge of affairs; at Paris the masters were in control. These two centers had a tremendous effect on the creation of other universities throughout Europe. We have inherited from these medieval institutions not only our gowns, hoods, degrees, examinations, and concepts of a stated curriculum and formal training but also our ideal of the mission a university should perform—the furtherance of human knowledge and the creation of a “goodly fellowship” of scholars.

Latin was a dynamic language throughout the medieval period. The churchmen did not hesitate to create new words to express new ideas and situations. The business of the Church was carried on in this universal medium, and Latin was also used with striking effects by the Goliardic poets and composers of religious hymns.

But a rival, growing stronger as the Middle Ages passed, rose to dispute with Latin the right to dominate literature—the vernacular languages. Coincident with the gradual rise of the national state, the development of towns, and the growth of trade was the increasing popularity of English, French, German, Italian, and Spanish as literary vehicles. Vernacular poetry developed early in such epics as the Anglo-Saxon *Beowulf* and the stirring sagas of the Germans and the Norse. French literature evolved the *chansons de geste*, tales of heroic deeds. Among the most famous of these poems is the *Song of Roland*. Famous poetic cycles grew and expanded about the deeds of Charlemagne, King Arthur, and the old stories of Troy, Thebes, and Rome. Southern France was meanwhile developing a chivalrous and romantic poetry, called Provençal literature, which was sung in courtly circles by troubadours. All the poetry was aristocratic in content. *Fabliaux* were written to please the bourgeoisie and satirize the stilted concepts of chivalric virtue and nobility, while ballad literature of the Robin Hood type grew up among the common people. Two of the most famous of the medieval poets, both of whom wrote their greatest masterpieces in their native tongues, were Geoffrey Chaucer

and Dante Alighieri. Chaucer gave us an unforgettably vivid picture of the lives and thoughts of fourteenth-century Englishmen in his *Canterbury Tales*. Dante's *Divine Comedy* constitutes a complex synthesis of medieval philosophy and ideals.

The greatest artistic achievement of the Middle Ages was the Gothic cathedral, a magnificent structure growing out of Romanesque patterns. The Romanesque building was based on the old Roman basilica, with the round or barrel arch added and a modified floor pattern in the shape of a cross. However, Romanesque architecture had not learned to intersect half-cylinders of different diameters or to create walls which could contain many windows and yet be strong enough to support the heavy weight of a stone roof. The result was that Romanesque churches tended to be low, thick-walled, and gloomy. The solution of the two problems by the introduction of the pointed arch and the flying buttress brought about the slender, soaring Gothic cathedral. Gothic reached its height in France. Spain and England utilized the new type of architecture, but Italy preferred a modified Romanesque style. The last quarter of the thirteenth century witnessed Gothic at its purest. After that it became overdecorated. It is significant that all the major French cathedrals were dedicated to the Virgin and that the entire Gothic cathedral represents medieval theology and ideals.

With the growth of Gothic came the development of the art of stained-glass windows, while in the churches of southern Europe with their minimum of windows mural painting began to develop. Sculpture was also influenced by the need for decorating these large edifices. Secular architecture in the Middle Ages made advances in building castles and later in erecting town halls and urban dwellings for the bourgeoisie. Painting was a subordinate art, but much artistic work was expended on beautiful illuminated manuscripts.

We can see at once that the cultural attainments of our medieval ancestors were considerable. We must forget, once and for all, the outworn and false views that the Middle Ages were dark and uncivilized. We ought to appreciate the underlying unity of medieval philosophy, science, education, literature, and art, and the one ideal that the *Summa Theologiae* of St. Thomas Aquinas, the curriculum of Paris and Bologna, the *Divine Comedy* of Dante, and the cathedral of Chartres have in common—the unification of human knowledge and the glorification of God.



PART FIVE

*New Horizons*

CHAPTER 15

*Nations in the Making*

CHAPTER 16

*Man Is the Measure*

CHAPTER 17

*The Ninety-Five Theses*

CHAPTER 18

*To the Ends of the Earth*



## NEW HORIZONS

**T**HE PANORAMA OF medieval civilization in western Europe, with its manors and fiefs, universities and monasteries, cathedrals and castles, has been surveyed. Now we enter a period of history in the west which had momentous consequences for the entire world. The birth of nations, the amazing fertility in art and thought which we know as the Renaissance, the revolt against the Universal Church, and the discovery of new worlds during the Age of Exploration—these were the four basic movements that brought about the transition to modern times. And these sweeping changes took place in little more than four centuries, from about 1200 to 1650. The tempo of change was quickened to an extraordinary degree, and the culture pattern of Europe was almost completely revolutionized.

Up to the transitional period in the thirteenth century, the Near East and the Far East had developed civilizations superior in many respects to that in the west. But now the tables were turned, and European culture became the most creative, expansive, and aggressive of any in the world. During the epoch of transition, which rang down the curtain on the medieval panorama, forces were set in motion which explain why the people of practically the entire modern world adopted western culture or had it thrust upon them. The transfer of dominance from the east to the west is one of the most momentous developments of early modern times.

In the transition period about to be surveyed, most of the basic medieval characteristics were radically transformed. The idea of political unity was shattered by the rise of nations. The Protestant Reformation, or the Religious Revolt as it is sometimes called, overthrew the hitherto undisputed supremacy of the papacy. The cult of authority and other-worldliness and the subordination of the individual were also greatly weakened. That was largely the result of the Renaissance. Born in Italy, the movement gradually spread over much of Europe, heralding a new day of emancipation and expression. For the first time since the days of classical Greece and Rome, men dared to challenge accepted beliefs, reveled in the beauties and joys of this life, and ceased to concentrate their attention upon preparing for the next.

The Renaissance is one of the most important as well as fascinating movements in world history. In its most correct usage, the term Renaissance refers to the remarkable outpouring of art and literature in Italy from 1300 to 1500. In a much wider sense it is used as a general term descriptive of the age of transition

from medieval to modern times. In this sense it includes the rise of nations, the Religious Revolt, the glorious achievements in art and literature, and the age of geographical exploration.

In the heyday of the Renaissance the Italian city-states rivaled the artistic and intellectual achievements of Periclean Athens. Eager scholars, called Humanists, rediscovered the long-neglected classics of Greece and Rome and wrote pamphlets exposing spurious ideas. Artists created masterpieces in stone or on canvas. Above all, Renaissance self-confidence showed that the rule of the group over the individual had ceased.

**T**HE ECONOMIC SIGNIFICANCE of the Renaissance is important. In the Middle Ages, the landed nobility were literally and figuratively in the saddle, but by the fourteenth century a new class had begun to make its power felt. Composed of merchants and burghers, the middle class, aided by the expansion of trade which accompanied the geographical explorations, rapidly gained in opulence and influence. The bourgeoisie now became as important in influencing the shape of modern society as the landed nobility had been in the Middle Ages. In no other area of Europe did the middle class forge ahead so rapidly as in the city-states of Italy. Here merchant princes became patrons of art and scholarship and did much to make the Renaissance possible.

Another manifestation of the passing of medieval times was the geographical exploration which expanded the reach and influence of European men until they encompassed the entire world. As early as the twelfth century, contacts with the advanced Moslem civilization stimulated a desire among Europeans to get in touch with other parts of the world. Starting in a halting fashion in the thirteenth century, geographical exploration hit its stride in the latter part of the fifteenth century, when Vasco da Gama sailed around Africa to reach India and Christopher Columbus reached America.

The Renaissance was not the greatest period in man's history, as so many people believe. But it was an age when man's development was greatly accelerated and when he re-asserted his faith in himself. Hence it was a daring age. Imbued with self-reliance and stimulated by new horizons which he saw spreading before his eyes, man turned his telescope on the stars or set sail in frail vessels to explore and acquire the unknown world. He turned his thoughts inward to explore new realms of thinking. The citizens of the Renaissance were irrepressible; they were self-confident to the point of being braggart and arrogant; but they were men of action—and our debt of gratitude to them is great.

# THE CONSOLIDATION OF KINGDOMS

	← ANGOLO-SAXON RULE →	← PLANTAGENET HOUSE →	← TUDOR LINE →
<b>England</b>	871-901 Alfred	1066 William the Conqueror	1215 Magna Charta
	← CAROLINGIANS →	← HOUSE OF CAPE →	← HOUSE OF VALOIS →
<b>France</b>	843 Peace of Verdun	987 Hugh Capet	1180-1223 Philip Augustus
	← CALIPHATE OF GORDOVA →	1215 Magna Charta	1295 Parliament begins
<b>Spain</b>	912	1031	1085 Toledo falls, "Reconquista" begins
	← COUNTS OF PORTUGAL →	1188 Ordinances of Leon	1212 Mohammedans defeated
<b>Portugal</b>	1095	1263	1283
	← HOHENSTAUFEN RULE →	1250 Frederick II dies	1273 Rudolph of Hapsburg
<b>German States</b>	962 Otto crowned Holy Roman Emperor	1077 Pope wins victory over king at Canossa	1356 Golden Bull
<b>Switzerland</b>			
<b>Italian States</b>	1017 Norman conquest of Sicily	1112-1154 Roger II of Sicily	1282 "Sicilian Vespers"
<b>Poland</b>			
			1291 Swiss Confederation
<b>Russia</b>	862 Vikings establish Novgorod	1386 Poland and Lithuania unite	1499 Treaty of Basel
<b>Byzantine Empire</b>	976-1025 Basil II	1112-1154 Rapid decline of Byzantine empire	1282 Mongol invasions Russia declines
	900	1100	1200
	800	900	1000
			1354 Ottoman Turks invade Europe
			1453 Fall of Constantinople
			1462-1505 Ivan the Great unites Russia
			1494, 1499 France invades Italy

## CHAPTER 15

# *Nations in the Making*



THE emergence of the national state, beginning in earnest in the late Middle Ages and not fully maturing until as recently as the nineteenth century, is perhaps the most outstanding and important political trend in modern history. In recent times totalitarianism has challenged the world's attention. From the twelfth century to the twentieth century, however, the national state, as it evolved, had few opposing systems with which to compete. As a result, until the map of the world began to change so rapidly in the years following 1930, we have known a world consisting of about fifty separate, distinct, and independent national states. Each of these units is made up of a group of people accepting the rule of their government, which not only has complete authority over its own citizens but is independent of external control by any other state. Within the nation people may differ as to religion, language, and even race, but there is one cardinal cohesive force that binds them together. It is a common pride, an emotion usually termed patriotism, which causes one national group to be aware not only of its own identity but of the differences between its people and those in other national units.

In the past few years political movements have been unleashed that aim to alter completely the national state system as we knew it even ten years ago. But until today, at least, political organization along national lines has been the cardinal feature in modern man's culture pattern. Every aspect of our lives is influenced, directed, and shaped by membership in a national state, from the language we speak, the type of government we obey and believe in, the literature we read, and the attitudes we hold, to the opinions we express concerning other human beings living in a nation different from our own. An

understanding of our world today, then, demands that we know something about the origin of the national-state system and its history during the last one thousand years. To begin this story is the purpose of the present chapter.

Our account of the making of the national state will touch first upon topics we have already noted in Chapter 12, the collapse of the Carolingian empire and the rise of feudalism. Then we will see why feudalism became inadequate and briefly summarize the reasons for its decline. In observing the rise of the national state we will use as case studies England, France, and Spain. The main outline of historical development is identical in each of these countries: (1) The king started with serious competitors to his royal authority, usually the Church and the feudal nobility, (2) the competitors were overthrown by building an efficient system of royal government that, above all, gave the people a more efficient standard of justice than they could obtain in the church or feudal courts, (3) wars in which the kings took an active part caused the people to regard the king as their natural leader, and (4) the kings made alliances with the rising middle class in the cities against their common enemy, the landed nobility. The result was approximately the same in the three countries: The king's government expanded to cover the entire country, creating the national state; the old feudal and church courts lost practically all their power; the officials of the king made laws, enforced them, and handed down royal justice without competition from any noble. The importance of human personality in this process must not be overlooked. Such outstanding rulers as William the Conqueror, Henry II, St. Louis IX, and Ferdinand did much to make possible the national state.

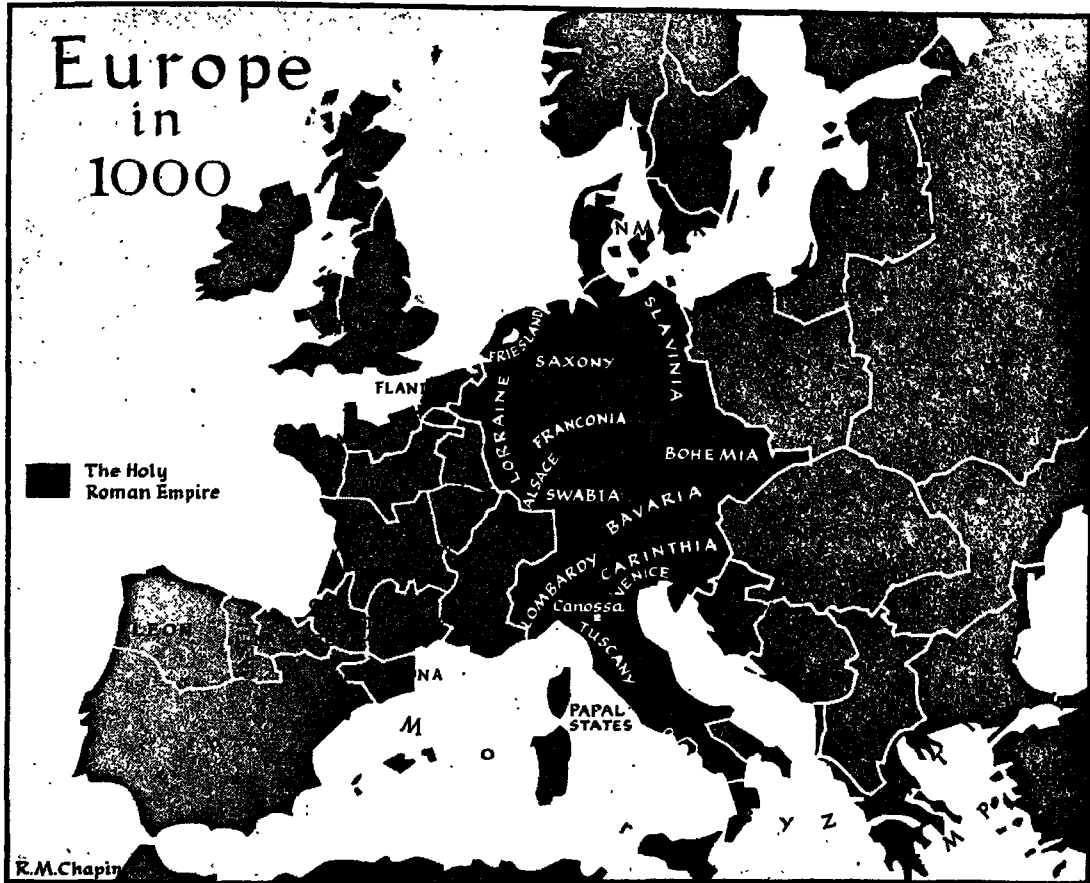
### *The Decline of Feudalism*

**The Carolingian empire.** To trace the development of nation-making, it is essential to return to the heroic attempt of Charlemagne to re-create the political unity which much of Europe had enjoyed under the Roman empire before the Germanic invasions in the fifth century. For a few years, from 800 to 814, law, peace, and efficient administration prevailed in the Carolingian empire, which stretched from the Pyrenees to Bohemia and from the Baltic to the Mediterranean. But Charlemagne's creation was not destined to outlive him very long. We have seen how his grandsons Charles, Louis, and Lothaire divided his empire among them by the Treaty of Verdun and how the desires of Charles and Louis for Lothaire's middle strip of territory foreshadowed the quarrels between the French and the Germans over the same lands. We have also seen how each kingdom became further atomized into numbers of small states whose rulers became as independent as kings themselves and how the process of decentralization

led to the growth of the feudal system, by which local officials assumed responsibility for the maintenance of law and order. The localized system which they created was a poor substitute for the strong, centralized administration which had operated during the heyday of Rome or when Charlemagne was at the height of his power. Feudalism has been called "confusion roughly organized."

Despite its many defects, however, feudalism was much better than no government at all. But giving it its due is not to deny that feudalism was a makeshift order which had to serve until something better could be devised. Between the ideal of a great centralized empire and the extreme localization of the feudal system there was a logical compromise—the national state.

**Inadequacies of feudalism.** Only by merging the dozens of separate feudal units into one unified scheme of government could the lack of a uniform currency be remedied, the many irritating toll and tariff barriers imposed



*In the year 1000 feudalism prevailed in most of Europe. The numerous small political units shown on this map are feudal holdings—counties, kingdoms, duchies, principalities—territories entirely different in organization and control from the states and nations of today. The units shown here are the largest kinds of feudal holdings. As we have seen, nobles with large holdings commonly subinfeudated many of their lands to lesser lords, who in turn might have vassals of their own with smaller holdings. Clearly this map is a simplified political picture.*

*It is also a static picture of a constantly changing situation. Boundaries of feudal states were very fluid. In the year 1005, say, certain districts might look entirely different (Bohemia, for example, lost a sizable corner of its territory to Poland for twenty-some years). Some states grew larger, some disappeared as the years went on. In a few cases the lord of a feudal state and his successors slowly extended their powers and their territory until, over a period of centuries, they came to rule a nation, as we shall see.*

*The medieval names of many regions are still familiar today. Alsace and Lorraine have figured in contemporary news. Bohemia is part of Hitler's name for former Czecho-Slovakia. Burgundy, Brittany, Flanders, Bavaria, and many others are still used, to refer not to the feudal states shown here, of course, but to the same general regions. As you study the maps of later periods, compare them with this one to see the varying fortunes of different regions.*

by local barons be removed, and trade advanced. Perhaps the greatest weakness of feudalism was its inability to guarantee law and order. It is true that feudal law aimed to see justice done between man and man, but in the event that the law was defied, there was no certainty that the forces of justice would triumph over those of the law-breaker. Amid the welter of hundreds of feudal principalities, each with its own law courts dispensing justice, there was a lack of uniformity in legal codes and judicial procedure, which led to much confusion, inefficiency, and often injustice.

One of the essential prerequisites for good government is that it be in the hands of skilled civil servants, but under a feudal system the units of government were too small and the opportunities for administrative work were on too limited a scale to encourage the development and the support of an efficient staff of civil servants. In any prosperous and well-governed country it is essential to have a group of skilled administrators to map out the right policy of foreign affairs and to plan economic measures for the country as a whole. It is, for example, vital that the main trunk roads used by all the people be maintained in good repair, but without a strong central government any poverty-stricken or indolent noble might refuse to attend to the needs of the main highway which passed through his domain.

In short, the outlook of the feudal baron was too limited. He often lost sight of the welfare of the whole people in his preoccupation with the problems and needs of his petty feudal domain. People can best live in harmony and advance materially when they subscribe to one central government which takes the larger view. Under feudalism there were too many conflicting loyalties.

**The decline of feudalism.** It is impossible to set a fixed date for the decline of feudalism. For example, the growth of royal power in France in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries curbed feudalism in its political aspects, but its social implications persisted down to the French Revolution. The strength of such English monarchs as Henry II and Edward I handicapped the power of their nobles enormously, while the ruinous Wars of the Roses put an end forever to feudal strength. Yet in Scotland the weakness of the royal family allowed certain nobles virtually to control the kingdom until the sixteenth century, while the

lack of national unity in Germany made it possible for feudalism to run unchecked to an even later period.

However, the feudal system finally came to an end (although only recently in eastern and southeastern Europe), and we can cite the following reasons for its decline: (1) political: the growth of royal power and the alliance of the new bourgeoisie with the monarchy against the landed aristocracy, making inevitable the establishment of a growing national consciousness, (2) social: the rapid increase of population and the emancipation of serfs during the later Middle Ages, making it impossible for the nobles to control ever-increasing numbers of persons who looked elsewhere for their allegiance and protection, (3) economic: the rise of towns and of a new middle class that no longer evaluated wealth in terms of land, the development of trade and industry, which upset the economic localism of the feudal fief, and the introduction of a money economy which made the self-sufficient manor obsolete, (4) military: the effects of such innovations as the longbow and gunpowder, which made infantry superior in striking power to the time-honored steel-clad noble horsemen and rendered obsolete the great stone castles which could not cope with the new artillery, and the creation of citizen armies equipped with these weapons, giving monarchs undisputed supremacy over their feudal subjects.

**Pioneer nations.** From the two dozen or more feudal units that filled the map of Europe in the eleventh century, England, France, and Spain arose, pioneers in national unification. Our main case study in the rise of the national state will be England. Although outdistanced in international affairs by France and Spain until the eighteenth century, England was the first country to achieve a completely organized nationhood. The story of England also merits high-lighting because it involves such important developments as the growth of the common law and the genesis of a system of representative government—the Parliament.

But Germany presents a different story. In Germany brilliant initial achievements toward the creation of a vigorous and united national state were doomed to dismal failure. The failure was to have momentous consequences in modern times, for Germany, achieving her unity late in the nineteenth century, had been

left behind by other nations in acquiring a great empire. This fact gave the Germans a sense of grievance and was one of the reasons for international discord in the twentieth century. Italy likewise did not become unified

until the nineteenth century. While England, France, and Spain were becoming national states, Italy remained a collection of small states, whose rivalry in commerce and politics prevented their union.

## *The Genesis of Modern England*

**The Roman occupation.** We have already seen in Chapter 6 that England became part of the Roman empire. The conquest of the Celtic peoples of England by the Romans brought about a fusion of cultures. In the main the less advanced Celtic culture surrendered to the superior civilization of the conqueror. From the Romans the subjected peoples obtained a new religion—Christianity. They came to use Roman pottery and utensils. Small cities sprang up on the sites of Roman garrisons. Everywhere there were splendid Roman roads, whose direction was so well planned that even today many roads in England follow the course of the old Roman highways.

**Later invasions.** In the fifth century the Roman legions were forced to return home by the threat of Germanic invasions into Italy, and shortly after their withdrawal other invaders—Angles, Saxons, Jutes, and Frisians—entered England. During their occupation of England the Romans gave the people peace and protection, but as soon as they left, bloodshed and pillage stalked the land. Roman villas were destroyed wholesale, and many Celts were put to the sword. Proof of the force with which the invader struck is the fact that there are left almost no traces of Celtic influence in the English language. During the fifth and sixth centuries England was in a chaotic condition. Not only did the Celts wage war on the invaders, but the various Anglo-Saxon tribes carried on war against each other. At one time there were seven distinct little tribal kingdoms, all jealous and hostile.

**King Alfred.** Finally, in the ninth century, the kingdom of Wessex rose to power, mainly as a result of another wave of invaders, the Danes. In fighting the new menace Wessex assumed leadership and successfully vanquished the enemy. This accomplishment was largely the work of the Wessex king, Alfred the Great, one of England's finest monarchs. The Danes were allowed to remain in England, and, settling in the central part of the island,

they developed a prosperous community. The Danes were great traders, and their little towns soon became flourishing centers of commerce. Danes and Saxons soon merged, and all difference between victor and vanquished disappeared.

During the reign of King Alfred other notable developments took place. In the realm of government the king reorganized the army, improved the system of local government, and issued a set of laws. He also did much to advance the intellectual life of the people. Alfred founded a palace school, encouraged the writing of the famous *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, the earliest existing vernacular history of any nation, and the translation into Anglo-Saxon of such classics as Boethius' *Consolation of Philosophy* and Bede's *Ecclesiastical History of the English Nation*. Alfred's achievements, coming a century after the death of Charlemagne (814), remind us of similar constructive exploits of the great Frankish king.

The Anglo-Saxons possessed a strong inclination toward what we today call representative government. They utilized numerous assemblies and courts in which any freeman had the right to participate if he were chosen to do so by his fellows. As we shall see, here was one of the seeds that later flowered into democratic government. The system of local government was so efficient that some of its features have been handed down to us today in England and the United States.

In Saxon England, however, there were serious weaknesses. While the system of local government was efficient, the royal power was fatally weak. The central government was not closely knit, and the king had little power over the great Saxon barons, the earls. The shock of the Norman conquest in 1066 initiated in England the needed novelty of a strong and efficient central government.

**The Norman conquest.** The Norman conquest of England<sup>3</sup> really began in the reign of Edward the Confessor (1042-1066). Although he himself was English, Edward spent most of



his early life in France, particularly in Normandy, one of the fiefs of the king of France, where he had received his education from Norman monks. When he returned to England and subsequently became king, Edward showed a strong pro-Norman bias in all his actions.

The great need of Anglo-Saxon England in the reign of Edward was a stronger central government, but Edward had no definite policy except one of showering favors on his Norman friends. On his death in 1066 the Witan, council of the kingdom, selected Harold as the new ruler. Immediately William, Duke of Normandy, put forward the claim that he was the rightful heir to the English throne, a claim based on the assertion that Edward had promised him the throne.

William was one of the most outstanding statesmen and soldiers of his time. He had become Duke of Normandy at the age of eight. Following his accession rebellion broke out in his domain. Three of the young duke's guardians were murdered, and for a few years he was kept under cover by his friends. When late in his teens, William came out of hiding and began to assert his power. He soon proved himself to be one of the best soldiers of his time, a man who showed little mercy to those who stood in his way. By 1047 he had ferreted out the nobles who had hoisted the banner of rebellion and from then on was the absolute master of Normandy.

William's Viking forbears had made their state the best administered, the most strongly unified in Europe. Normandy was far ahead of other European states in the art of governing. Here a strong government had subordinated all contending powers to the law of the duke, while across the Channel in England the powerful earls were continually embarrassing the king.

By the clever use of propaganda, apparently an effective weapon as far back as the eleventh century, William secured the favor of the Pope, which gave to his challenge the flavor of a crusade and, most important to the duke, a well-equipped army of hard-fighting adventurers, mostly Norman knights, who looked upon the proposed conquest of England as a kind of investment which would pay them rich dividends in the form of lands and serfs. On October 14, 1066, King Harold with his army of Saxons at Hastings blocked the way

of William on his march to London. All day long, masses of heavily armored Norman knights charged the serried ranks of the Saxon king's *housecarls* (picked palace guards) and the poorly equipped militia. By a clever ruse William broke the ranks of untrained levees, and late in the afternoon Harold was killed when an arrow pierced his eye. With their brave leader fallen, the ranks of the regular soldiers broke, and William was master of the field. The defeat spelled the end of Anglo-Saxon rule and the beginning of a new pattern of events in England.

*Government under William the Conqueror.* No sweeping changes were made in the system of government in England after the coronation of William. Rather the system was infused with a new energy, and old Saxon political institutions were remodeled and their functions redefined and expanded. William the Conqueror believed in utilizing as much as possible the institutions with which the English were familiar. This policy was carried out particularly in the field of local government, where the Saxon shire and another local unit called the hundred were retained as administrative units together with their local courts. The sheriff, the old local Saxon official, was also retained, and his duties and powers expanded to such a degree that he became the most important cog in the Norman system of strong central government.

William's one basic contribution to England was a strong central government. This stern and wrathful man gave England an iron rule and ruthlessly oppressed any opposition to his will, but through the establishment of despotic power he laid the foundation for the erection of a free and well-governed state. The first necessity for the development of a well-ordered state is the removal of civil strife and of rival powers by the creation of one sovereign power. The next step is the development by the supreme authority of an adequate machinery of lawmaking and enforcement. In both of these the sovereign body must exercise its power benevolently, that is, it must not be unjust or capricious. As William certainly brought about the first step and did much to achieve the second, he laid the groundwork for English government as we know it today. Under his vigorous regime the great Saxon earldoms were broken up, the king's commissioners toured the shires, and the sheriffs be-

came the effective fingers on the long arm of royal power.

**William's feudal system.** William the Conqueror's determination to make his power as king supreme is demonstrated by the way in which he introduced feudalism into England. In Anglo-Saxon England a full-grown feudal system had not developed, although there were tendencies in that direction. William retained the manorial system, advanced political feudalism, and fused the two into a fully developed feudal structure. He exacted homage from all landowners in England, whether or not they were his own immediate vassals. In other words, all nobles, whether tenants-in-chief holding land directly from the king or lesser tenants holding their land as vassals of other nobles, swore loyalty and obedience to the king, their feudal suzerain.

Certain other important modifications were also made in the tentative English version of feudalism. In Anglo-Saxon England lords could not compel their knights to fight for them. The king, therefore, never could rely upon his vassals for troops and armed support. William changed this uncertain situation by demanding that all his vassals and their vassals should provide him with armed knights if the necessity arose. In addition, William did not rely upon feudal levies of knights as the sole basis of his armed forces. Instead he retained the old Anglo-Saxon *fyrð*, militia, in order to give the king a powerful fighting force to overawe any rebellion which might originate among the strong feudal barons.

**The Domesday survey.** The Domesday survey, conducted in 1085-1086, admirably exemplifies the businesslike, methodical, and strong government which William established in England. The king wished to secure an accurate census of the economic resources of his land and the wealth held by his subjects, as a basis for an equitable tax. Special commissioners sent out by the king collected testimony from special sworn juries. The inventory caused much grumbling and even rioting. Apparently people in the eleventh century had the same aversion to an income tax that their descendants have today. "So narrowly did he cause the survey to be made," grumbles a Saxon chronicler, "that there was not one single hide nor rood of land, nor—it is shameful to tell but he thought it no shame to do—was there an ox, cow, or swine that was not

set down in the writ."<sup>1</sup> The original manuscript containing the Domesday survey is still extant—the most valuable document in English history.

**Henry I.** Namesakes often prove a disappointment, and so it was with William II, who followed his father, darkening his reign by cruelty and capricious government. It remained for Henry I (1100-1135) to carry on the task of developing the strong and efficient government which had been so admirably initiated by his great father. So well did Henry I rule that his contemporaries called him the Lion of Justice. High praise indeed are these words of the Anglo-Saxon chronicler: "A good man he was, and there was great awe of him. No man durst misdo another in his time. He made peace for man and beast."

Henry quelled a serious uprising of rebellious barons who wished to weaken the royal power. Then, having consolidated his position, he turned to the task of improving the structure of government that had been bequeathed him by William I. William's Great Council, made up of the chief nobles, had been the most important agency in advising the king on matters of state. But after the sessions of the Council had been held, the nobles returned to their estates, and it was soon appreciated that there was a real need for the creation of a small but permanent council of advisers to the king which would always be on hand if its services were needed. Such a permanent body, called the *curia regis*, came into being in Henry's reign. In addition, much was done to create a staff of professional civil servants who would bring new efficiency to government. A beginning was also made in the administration of justice through the practice of sending royal judges, known as itinerant justices, out on circuit to all parts of the kingdom.

**An interlude of confusion.** Henry's achievements in strengthening the monarchy by greater centralization were almost undone by nineteen years of chaos which followed his reign. The king's only surviving child, Matilda, had been married to a French count, the ruler of Anjou, and the barons of England had all faithfully promised to accept her as queen on her father's death. Instead they illegally selected a sovereign more to their liking—an affable and easy-going prince named Stephen of Blois, son of William the Con-

queror's daughter. Stephen was chivalrous; his character was pure and his intentions honorable. But he had absolutely no backbone and was equally devoid of any qualities of leadership.

Immediately upon the accession of the new king the great nobles began to pillage and rob and fight among themselves. England became a land where only might made right. To add to the misery, a civil war was carried on between the king and forces that had been raised by Henry I's heir, Matilda.

*The accession of Henry II.* The anarchy which devastated England for nearly two decades ceased with the accession of Henry II (1154-1189), the son of Matilda and Geoffrey of Anjou. Within five months order had been restored and the illicit fortified castles of the English barons had been demolished. This young king, founder of the Plantagenet (also called Angevin) house, as a result of marriage and inheritance, found himself sovereign at twenty-one of a great empire stretching from Scotland to the Pyrenees (see map opposite). The English holdings in France far exceeded the territory ruled over by the Capetian kings, who from their capital at Paris eyed their vassal rival with fear and jealousy. The year 1154, which witnessed Henry's succession to the English throne and the joining of English and French holdings under the king of England, dates the beginning of the strife between England and France which runs like a red thread through the tapestry of medieval history.

Henry came to the throne well prepared for the profession of king. He had already obtained experience in administering Normandy for his father. He had a passion for efficiency and order and was unusually well educated, perhaps the most learned king of his time, and he had a genius for government.

Contemporary documents give us an interesting and intimate picture of Henry Curmantle, as he was called. His freckled face, stocky frame, short stout figure, bow legs, and harsh voice do not make a very prepossessing figure. He cared little for royal dignity and never courted popularity. Only after his death did his subjects appreciate the true measure of his worth. Henry was a man of limitless energy, always on the move and ever restless, and his courtiers had little time to relax. It is said that Henry found it particularly hard to sit still during Mass and scandalized some of

his subjects by scribbling notes and chatting with his cronies.

Henry's reign was an expression of his restlessness. He was ever improving, changing, copying, and fighting. He fought the feudal nobility, clashed with the Church, warred against the Capetians, quarreled with his rather worthless sons, and had much trouble managing his queen, Eleanor of Aquitaine, who, because of the influence she wielded in the domains of the Plantagenets, has been called the greatest of all Frenchwomen.

Henry II carried on the work of preparing England to be a strong national state, begun by his great grandfather William I and extended by his grandfather Henry I. The methods which Henry II utilized for his work are particularly important, because they have become part of the structure of government in many modern lands. Henry's great contribution to civilization was in the field of law and judicial procedure. The judicial reforms of Henry II cannot be overestimated. As we shall soon see, they constitute the basis for the present law of the British empire and of the United States.

*Henry and the judicial system.* Stephen, Henry's ineffective predecessor, left him a sorry heritage of corruption in the courts, breakdown in the promising system of governmental administration forged by William the Conqueror and his son Henry I, and a nobility arrogant and strong. The new king, Henry II, was disturbed at the confusion prevailing in England's judicial system. There were royal courts administered by the king's justices, the old Saxon tribunals of the shire and the hundred, baronial courts administered independently by feudal lords, and an aggressive structure of church courts threatening to extend its supremacy over the whole realm.

*The Assize of Clarendon.* Henry realized that the mere reestablishment of his grandfather's administrative system was not enough. A more unified, centralized government had to be established, directly dependent upon the king. He began by thoroughly reorganizing the judicial system in a series of decrees called assizes. Most important of these was the Assize of Clarendon in 1166, which laid down the basic features of Henry's new court system. It represents a landmark in English legal history, for (1) it was the first example of a king promulgating laws, in contrast with a mere re-

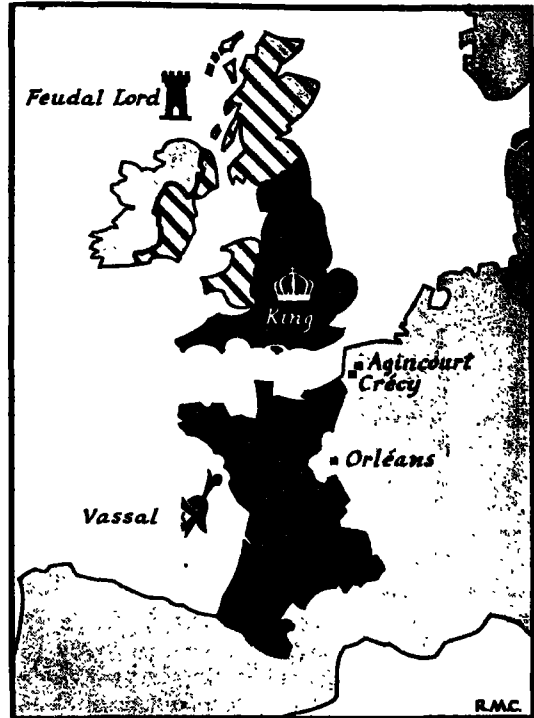
wording of traditional custom, (2) it was the first attempt to weaken radically the courts administered by the feudal nobility, (3) it stressed the old Germanic principle of the right and duty of all free men to take part in their own government, preparing the way for self-government in England.

More specifically, the Assize of Clarendon dealt with two judicial agencies, itinerant justices and the jury system, which have exercised considerable influence upon the administration of justice to the present day. Although royal judges had been sent on circuit to dispense justice in the reign of Henry I, it was Henry II's Assize of Clarendon which made this judicial practice a definite and permanent element in the English legal system. And although Henry II did not create the jury, he realized its possibilities, expanded its functions, and started it on its long journey of becoming the most characteristic feature of the judicial system of all English-speaking nations.

The Normans had brought from France the custom of utilizing a group of witnesses to give information under oath to the king's officials. It had been used, we will remember, by William the Conqueror in his Domesday survey. The Assize of Clarendon ordered the king's sheriffs to select a certain number of men who were expected to report all crimes which the witnesses thought should be tried. This ancient jury is the direct ancestor of our modern grand jury. The "presentments" of Henry's juries were turned over to the royal judges on circuit, who then proceeded against the criminals.

**Baronial and church courts.** Henry not only brought his subjects better justice, but he skillfully diminished the activities of one of his judicial competitors, the courts of the barons. In a series of very important assizes, the king made his courts the protector of the property rights of his people. Against his other legal competitor, the courts of the church, Henry was not so successful. His resolve to prevent rogues from claiming benefit of clergy in the ecclesiastical courts resulted in the murder of Thomas à Becket, archbishop of Canterbury, for which Henry was not really accountable.

Becket was the son of a well-to-do London merchant, who early in life became the boon companion of the king. At that time Becket was not famous for religious zeal or piety. The king made him his chancellor and eventually archbishop of Canterbury. Following his pro-



*Henry II was king of England and feudal lord of Scotland, Wales, and lands in Ireland and France. Though he held more territory in France than the French king himself, he was vassal to that king for his holdings there. King, vassal, and feudal suzerain, he bequeathed his successors a complicated interest in French territory which was fought out in the Hundred Years' War (see page 417). Crécy, Agincourt, and Poitiers were high points in the war, and the raising of the siege of Orléans by Joan of Arc brought victory to the French.*

motion Becket suddenly became passionately attached to the Church, an attachment which Henry found difficult to understand. In 1164 the King issued the Constitutions of Clarendon, which laid down that all church officials accused of any crime should be taken before a royal court. If the royal body thought that a crime had been committed, the culprit was turned over to a church court for trial, and if declared guilty, the man was then sent before a royal court for pronouncement of sentence. It seemed to be a fair solution to the problem of benefit of clergy, but it was repudiated by Becket, who fled to the continent.

For six years the archbishop remained abroad. In the meantime the archbishop of York, at Henry's behest, had crowned Henry's eldest son as successor to the throne. Finally the quarrel was patched up, at least on the surface, and Becket returned. But upon his arrival in England he excommunicated the churchmen who had assisted at the coronation ceremony. News of his action reached Henry in Normandy, who in a fit of passion roared, "My subjects are sluggards, men of no spirit, they keep no faith with their lord, they allow me to be made the laughingstock of a low-born clerk." Hearing the tirade a group of knights slipped away, crossed the Channel, and murdered Becket within the precincts of Canterbury cathedral.

The incident destroyed all chance of reform. For the remainder of the Middle Ages benefit of clergy remained an obstacle to the ambition of the royal government to render the same brand of justice to all men. However, itinerant justices, the jury, the extension of writs, and the expansion of the king's peace did contribute toward uniting the people.

**Common law.** Out of Henry II's judicial system came the most important contribution in welding the English people together—the common law. Only one other system of law in the entire history of civilization, the Roman, can rival the system which is now used by all English-speaking nations and which owes so much for its existence to England's first Plantagenet king. Unlike its great Roman counterpart, English law is not codified. It is the result of custom, not legislation. Beginning with the reign of Edward I, the important decisions of the royal justices were collected into Year Books, and these legal opinions became the basis for future decisions made in the king's courts. Hence a system of rules and precedents made by the king's judges became the law, "common" to all English people, and superseded the many diverse systems of local justice and custom which had existed in the shires.

**Cultural unity under Henry II.** Not only was England being welded into a single whole by the governmental agencies of a strong monarchy, but culturally a comparable process took place. The Norman conquest had placed side by side two distinct civilizations, the Norman-French and the Anglo-Saxon. For over two hundred years the former was dominant. In fact, during that period England was

only a cultural appendage of France. The language of the ruling class was French. Gothic architecture and the university came from France, as did feudalism, chivalry, and the crusading spirit. The common people continued to speak English, which later was restored as the official language.

The merging of the two peoples, however, proceeded fairly rapidly. Marriages between Saxon and Norman were soon the usual thing. Although the English language maintained an unostentatious existence among the common folk, and French occupied an invulnerable position, quietly the conquerors and the conquered were being merged into a common stock, one in which English elements rather than French were to predominate. The process was completed in the latter part of the fourteenth century. The English language emerged triumphant and was substituted for French in the schools and law courts. This development, whereby English civilization attained its independence and ceased to be a mere offshoot of that of France, was as important in its influences upon the making of national unity as were the legal reforms of Henry II.

With the passing of Henry II, England lost a great king, a man who is regarded by some historians as the greatest of all English sovereigns. His accomplishments in strengthening the royal power at the expense of the feudal nobles, in giving his people prompt and efficient justice, and in initiating a law common to all the realm stamp Henry as one of the greatest architects of the English state.

**Henry's successors.** It often happens in history that a good beginning made by one generation is marred by the foolish mistakes and lack of intelligence of the next. So it was in early England. The sons and the grandson of Henry were poor successors to the great founder of the Plantagenet line. Richard was a knight-errant. Having no heart for the prosaic tasks of government, he wasted his country's wealth and treasure in military exploits in Europe and the Holy Land. In the Third Crusade Richard earned fame as the peerless knight of his day in his struggle against Saladin, the leader of the Saracens. His brother John was a rogue of whom it has been said, "We search in vain for any good deed, one kindly act to set against his countless offenses."<sup>2</sup> That unworthy ruler became involved

in a struggle with Pope Innocent III (discussed in Chapter 13) in which John was forced to make abject surrender to the papacy.

**The Magna Charta.** The roots of parliaments and representative legislatures can be traced back to medieval England. It was during this time that Englishmen began to transform despotic into limited monarchy, to obtain charters guaranteeing fundamental liberties, and to secure a voice in the government of the country.

The origins of English representative government go back as far as the Saxon era. In the local assemblies of the Anglo-Saxons, called *moots*, there were elected officials. Following the Norman conquest of England in 1066, much of the Anglo-Saxon political tradition was preserved. A little more than one hundred years later another advance in representative government was made during the reign of King John. King John had alienated his barons by trying to collect illegal feudal dues and permitting infractions of feudal law. The king's tyranny brought on civil war in which the nobles were victorious, and in June 1215, John affixed his seal to *Magna Charta*, one of the most important documents in the history of human freedom.

In reality *Magna Charta* did not introduce any new constitutional principles. It was merely an agreement between members of the aristocratic feudal class—the king and his barons. At the time the charter was signed, it did not guarantee trial by jury and taxation only by consent of Parliament. Nor did it initiate representative government. These provisions of the charter, however, were vital:

Clause XII: Taxation or feudal aid except those sanctioned by custom "shall be levied in our kingdom only by the common consent of our kingdom," i.e., by the king's Great Council. Clause XXXIX: "No free man shall be taken or imprisoned or dispossessed, or outlawed or banished, or in any way destroyed . . . except by the legal judgment of his peers or by the law of the land."

Clause XL: "To no one will we sell, to no one will we deny, or delay right or justice."

These limitations upon the power of the king applied in 1215 only to freemen, that is, to the clergy and the barony. Little or nothing was said about the rights of that five sixths of the population who were serfs. But when the

feudal system disappeared, the term "freeman" was interpreted to apply to every Englishman. The guarantees of *Magna Charta*, therefore, became the rights of the many.

**Significance of Magna Charta.** The importance of *Magna Charta* lies not in its original purpose but in the subsequent use of it. In the struggle against the despotism of the Stuart kings in the seventeenth century, for example, Clause XII of the charter was interpreted to guarantee the principle of no taxation without representation and Clause XXXIX to guarantee trial by jury. G. B. Adams maintains that the importance of *Magna Charta* lies in the fact that potentially it embodied two great principles: (1) that the law is above the king; (2) that if the king breaks customary law he can be compelled by force to obey the law of the land. "It is upon these two principles, henceforth inseparable, . . ." declares Adams, "that the building of the [English] constitution rested. It was through them that *Magna Charta* accomplished its great work for free government in the world."<sup>3</sup> The principle that the power of the crown is limited, that the monarch must obey the law, was relied upon in the fourteenth century in the deposition of two English kings, Edward II and Richard II.

**Government under Edward I.** John's son, Henry III, although sincerely pious and devout, was a failure as a king. The work of Henry II, however, was not to be left uncompleted. In 1272 Edward I, who ranks as one of England's half dozen really outstanding monarchs, became king. In short order strong government was restored. The governmental reforms initiated by Henry II were continued and advanced. Edward further weakened the powers of the feudal courts. He restricted the power of the Church and built up a fine body of professional civil servants who actually managed the palace. He improved the mode of operation of itinerant justices and gave impetus to a new institution, Parliament, which was to become the most significant governmental agency developed by the English people. These reforms were incorporated in a series of important statutes. In fact so prolific was Edward as a lawmaker that he has been dubbed the English Justinian.

**Edward and English unity.** Edward was the first king to envision fully a union of the British people—Englishmen, Scots, Welsh, and

Irishmen—under the English crown. Edward's conception of a united Britain was one of the most important elements in his policy, and the steps he took to put it into practice were perhaps his chief work.

Edward was brilliantly successful with the Welsh. After a thorough conquest Wales became part of England in 1284, and in 1301 the oldest surviving son of Edward was given the title of Prince of Wales by his father. It was Edward's cherished ambition to achieve a political union between Scotland and his own country. At the outset of his reign the chances for success appeared bright. But although he obtained recognition of his overlordship from some of the Scots, Edward alienated the Scottish people by his arbitrary actions. A war resulted which postponed the union of Scotland and England for centuries.

English supremacy in Ireland had been asserted by an armed invasion of Norman knights in the reign of Henry II. During the next hundred years, however, little was done by the English rulers to consolidate their conquest, and Edward was so involved with affairs on the continent and in Scotland that he had little time left for Ireland. As we shall see, the modern English state ultimately consisted of a union of four peoples under the leadership of the English, but in the union Ireland was always a rebellious and unwilling partner.

**The origins of Parliament.** The potential importance of *Magna Charta* would not have been realized without a political institution known as Parliament, which first became important during Edward I's reign. In Anglo-Saxon times the king had had a council of prominent nobles called the Witan. William the Conqueror made this council into a feudal body composed of his tenants-in-chief and called it the Great Council. It acted as a court of trial and as an advisory body in the making of laws.

Parliaments (so-called from the French *parler*, to speak), or assemblies, became common in Europe between 1250 and 1350. The reason is not quite plain. Apparently one important influence was the idea that any exceptional demand for money made by the king should receive the consent of more than just the feudal and official classes convened in the traditional king's council. The growth of assemblies is evidence of the rapidly growing wealth and influence of the bourgeoisie in the towns. As

a recognition of the importance of this class and as a means of obtaining another source of revenue, the kings of Europe began the practice of adding representatives of the bourgeoisie to the feudal councils. In the century following the year 1250, *cortes* appeared in Spain, the Estates General were established in France, the Diet in Bohemia, the Diet and *Landtage* in Germany, and Parliament in England. With the exception of the one in England all these assemblies either ceased to exist or remained completely under the tutelage of the monarch.

Under Edward I several significant developments took place in the evolution of the English Parliament. On several occasions Edward summoned representatives of counties and towns to meetings of the Great Council, and in 1295 he called together the "Model Parliament," the most representative group yet convened. Two years later the king agreed that certain taxes could not be levied without the consent of Parliament, a principle which assured that body of being summoned from time to time. From Edward's time on, Parliaments became more and more essential to English government. In calling Parliaments, the English kings had no idea of making any concession to popular government. Their main object was to obtain revenue. The practice of consulting Parliament became so necessary that by the fourteenth century the kings began to realize, too late, the potential danger to their royal prerogatives in this new agency.

**Increasing powers of Parliament.** Early in the fourteenth century Parliament divided into two houses, the upper, called the House of Lords, representing the barons, and the lower, the House of Commons, composed of the knights and the middle classes. The Commons, main source of financial supply for the king, soon discovered its power. As a result of this "power of the purse," the king was soon forced to agree that no tax should be levied without the consent of Parliament. Later it became the custom for Parliament to withhold its financial grants until the king had redressed certain grievances, attention to which had been directed by petition. Taking advantage of the desperate financial straits of the English kings during the Hundred Years' War, Parliament not only maintained its independence in granting moneys but also acquired the right to direct how revenue should be spent.

Important gains were also made by Parliament in obtaining a voice in actual lawmaking. Originally legislation had been solely a royal function. The Commons, however, began presenting petitions to the king with the request that they be enacted into law. Gradually the right to initiate legislation through petition was obtained; Parliament merely refused to grant revenue if its petitions were not accepted by the king. Often, however, the king tried to thwart the will of the Commons by enacting laws which did not coincide with the original petitions or ones about which the Commons had not been consulted at all.

**The Hundred Years' War.** It is impossible to follow in detail the complex events which occurred in the development of England from the death of Edward I in 1307 to the coming of the first Tudor king to the throne in 1485. In brief, this span of 178 years embraced the Hundred Years' War with France and the decrease of the power of the English monarchy. For more than one hundred years English kings fatally divided their energies and limited their achievements at home by following the siren call of military glory in France. The object was to regain the large holdings in France which had once in Plantagenet days been subject to the king of England. As long as the English interfered in the affairs of France, the growth of national monarchy was hindered in both countries. It was fortunate, then, that ultimately the English were driven out of France.

Another result of the Hundred Years' War was that kings became financially dependent upon Parliament. This dependence compelled them to grant one petition after another, extending Parliament's powers until, early in the fifteenth century, Parliament became the dominant factor in government. The most important gains made during this period were the guarantee of freedom of debate, the stipulation that money bills must originate in the House of Commons, the rule that statutes should duplicate exactly petitions presented by the Commons, and the right of the House of Commons to determine who should be voters in the country at large.

**The Wars of the Roses.** The second development after Edward's reign was the decline of the power of the English kings after the reign of Edward I and the recrudescence of the power of the nobles. England became the

arena for struggles between selfish baronial cliques who wished to gain control of the monarchy and Parliament, not to insure justice for the mass of the people but in order to feather their own nests. Two years after the end of the Hundred Years' War, in 1453, rivalry between the most powerful baronial groups in England flared into a civil conflict known as the Wars of the Roses, which weakened the feudal system in England. During the civil war Parliament became the tool of whatever noble faction was temporarily in power. England was for thirty years a lawless land.

**Tudor rule.** A great longing for order, especially among the trading class, brought about the accession in 1485 of Henry VII, first of England's Tudor monarchs. Henry VII and his successors, especially his son Henry VIII, reintroduced strong, almost absolute government into England. The country had now achieved the full status of a national state. Tudor rule was popular because it worked toward the restoration of law and order and the promotion of trade. A single, well-meaning tyrant, the king, was preferred to the many unscrupulous tyrants who had preyed on the land during the Wars of the Roses.

On the surface Parliament received a serious setback, apparently becoming totally subservient—a rubber stamp in the hands of the king. Paradoxically, however, Tudor government eventually made possible a further advance of parliamentary powers, for although the Tudor kings were often highhanded, they always worked through Parliament. This association with the king made the Commons, especially, more conscious of its potential power. Parliamentary procedure became more efficient and standardized. Parliament was willing for a time to follow its strong leader, the king, for fundamentally the two were partners in an alliance against the nobles.

**Progress in England.** By the end of the fifteenth century Norman and Saxon had merged. A new language had come forth, the old Saxon tongue enriched by the addition of Norman French. A start had been made in the direction of uniting the British Isles, for Wales was now part of England. After a hundred years of struggle the English had learned the bitter lesson that it did not pay to try to conquer France but that it was wise to concentrate on purely English affairs. The lessons of the Hundred Years' War, the



achievements of her kings, the development of a new tongue—all of these were forces making for a distinctive English nation. Still another

binding element was the common law, which evolved particularly in the reigns of Henry II and Edward I.

### *The Beginnings of the French National State*

**The course of French development.** In France the process of nation making followed the same general trend as in England. The accomplishments of great kings were decisive in promoting national unity. The nobles tended to impede the consolidation of the country under royal power and had to be crushed. Townsmen were often supporters of the kings against the nobles. The conflict between the Church and the rising monarchy was dominant in both English and French history. The tragic quarrel between Henry II and his archbishop Thomas à Becket over the judicial supremacy of the king's courts is comparable to the refusal of Philip the Fair to permit the Pope to interfere with the financial affairs of the French kings, although the latter disagreement took place later than Henry's quarrel with Thomas à Becket. By the time of Philip the Fair the kings were getting strong enough to defy the papacy, and we remember from our discussion in Chapter 13 that Philip not only defied but actually abused the Pope.

**France after Charlemagne.** For more than one hundred years after the death of Charlemagne the land of the West Franks, now known as France, suffered under the inefficient rule of feeble Carolingian kings. In 987 Louis V, the last of his line, was killed accidentally, and his subjects turned to the House of Capet, which in the person of Odo, Count of Paris, had distinguished itself in the defense of his capital against the fierce Northmen. Now the nobles in 987, approximately one hundred years after Odo's exploit, selected his descendant Hugh Capet, a man of wisdom, honor, and valor, to bear the royal title.

**France under the Capetians.** As we have already seen, France in the late tenth century was not a homogeneous nation administered by one central authority but rather a collection of feudal states. The counts of Paris at that time enjoyed the empty title of King of France. Surrounded by great feudal barons much more powerful than themselves, these counts exercised effective authority only in what was called their royal domain, a narrow ribbon of territory in the upper valleys of the

Seine and Loire rivers. This little area, ruled by the descendants of Hugh Capet, the founder of the Capetian dynasty, was called the Ile de France and was literally an "island of royalty in a sea of feudalism."<sup>4</sup> (See the map on page 416.) It is remarkable that the office of king in France had not been allowed to lapse, so inconsequential had become the powers of kingship in the heyday of feudalism. But apparently both the Church and the barons felt that a king was necessary to society.

The Capetian line of kings ruled France from 987 to 1328. England as a whole had been united by the conquest of Norman kings, but the Capetians had to build France up bit by bit, as fief after fief was taken from the nobles and added to the royal domain. This explains why France was never so thoroughly unified in the Middle Ages as was England. She had no common law such as was developed in England, and each of her provinces, down to the Revolution in 1789, retained its own distinctive customs.

The success of the Capetian kings in creating the kingdom of France may be attributed to the following reasons: (1) The family was extremely fortunate in the matter of succession to the throne. For three hundred years the house of Capet never lacked a male heir. (2) The nobles claimed the right to elect the king (a puppet ruler if they liked), but by having the eldest son elected and consecrated during the reign of the father, the Capetians gradually built up a precedent of hereditary succession. (3) At least in the first stages of national unification, the kings solicited and received the valuable support of the Church and clergy. (4) The Capetians always considered themselves the successors of Charlemagne and inheritors of the royal tradition. The ceremony of coronation and consecration kept alive the idea that an aura of reverence and sanctity adhered to kingship. (5) As supreme overlords of all the nobles in the feudal system, the kings of France had, at least in theory, extensive powers in demanding homage, in enforcing the right of wardship and escheat, and in collecting the usual feudal aids from their vassals. (6) The

middle class returned thanks for the royal support given them by tendering the king money and military detachments raised in the cities.

(7) As in the growth of the national state in England, the French kings succeeded in creating a system of government and royal tribunals much more efficient and acceptable to the people than that offered by the barons. (8) During the 341 years of Capetian rule France was blessed in having a number of capable kings, several worthy to be classed in their statesmanship alongside such English monarchs as Henry II and Edward I.

**Louis le Gros (1108-1137).** Progress under the first four Capetians was very slow. The royal domain was expanded but little. According to Petit-Dutaillis, their only great political victory was the establishment of the tradition of hereditary kingship.<sup>5</sup> It fell to Louis VI (known in his day as *le Gros*, the Fat) to be the founder of Capetian greatness. "He was the first ruler of France since Charlemagne whose conduct was steadily governed by the ideal of a public authority created to maintain public order, with duties toward all and rights over all."<sup>6</sup>

Louis thoroughly suppressed independent and unruly vassals in the royal domain of the Ile de France. Lawless vassals had been in the habit of sallying from their great castles to terrorize and pillage the countryside. So relentlessly did Louis ferret out these robber lords that he was called the Fighter. By the time of his death Louis had been able to establish the royal power on a firm basis in his own domain.

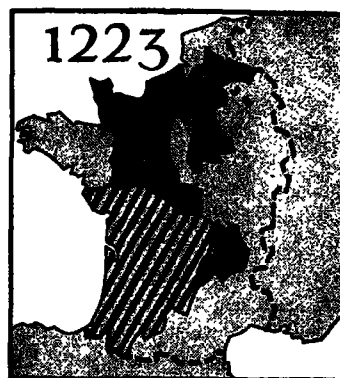
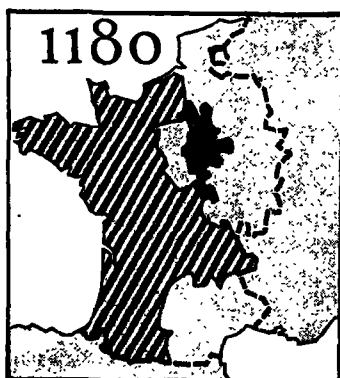
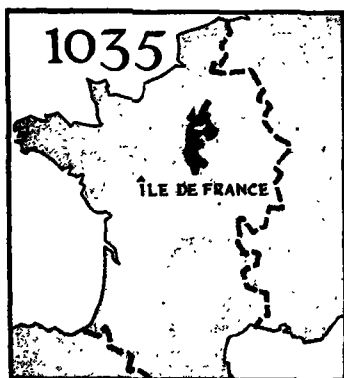
**Philip Augustus (1180-1223).** The grandson of Louis VI, Philip II, called Augustus, is as significant in the rise of the French nation as Henry II is in the evolution of England. At the outset of his reign Philip is reported to have said, "I desire that at the end of my reign the monarchy shall be as powerful as in the time of Charlemagne."<sup>7</sup> Certainly Philip did everything possible during his kingship of forty-four years to achieve his goal. Philip's greatest struggle was his effort to wrest from the English Plantagenets the territory they held in France. As the reader will recall, Henry II, England's first Plantagenet ruler, ruled over a large part of France as well as England. Philip's father, Louis VII, stressing the great wealth of Henry II and the meager resources and territory of the French

king, said to an English official, "Your Lord, the King, wants nothing—men, horses, gold, silk, diamonds, game, fruits; he has all in abundant plenty. We in France have only bread, wine, and gaiety."<sup>8</sup>

Philip's role was to disrupt the Plantagenet holdings and thus add to the wealth of his royal house. While the redoubtable Henry II lived, Philip made little headway, although he made Henry's life miserable by fomenting plots and encouraging the English king's faithless sons to revolt. During the reigns of Richard the Lion Heart and John, the wily Philip by trickery and warfare gained control of half of the Plantagenet possessions in France. The puny domain that Louis VII (son of Louis VI) inherited was made up of little more than the Ile de France, a state isolated from the sea and hemmed in on all sides by the territories of jealous barons. Philip's accomplishment was to expand his diminutive domain into a middle-sized state (see the map on the next page).

Philip not only increased the royal domain threefold but strengthened the royal administrative system. He devised new agencies of centralized government. New officials, bailiffs and seneschals, combined the duties of the royal itinerant justices and sheriffs in England. A corps of loyal officials was collected around the king, recruited not from the feudal nobility but from the ranks of lawyers trained in the Roman law and from shrewd burgher businessmen. This class of professional civil servants soon developed into expert governmental advisers and administrators. As in England, the effect of these experts in government is seen in the creation of specialized departments of administration, such as the *parlement*, a supreme court of justice (not to be confused with the English Parliament), the Chamber of Accounts, a financial body, and the Royal, or Privy, Council, a group of advisers who assisted the king in the conduct of the daily business of the state. Like the English monarchs, the Capetian rulers were creating an efficient central government that soon eliminated the competition of feudal lords.

**Louis IX (1226-1270).** After the brief but strong reign of Louis VIII, Philip's son, France passed under the rule of another monarch, Louis IX, better known as the Saint because the nobility of his character led to his canonization by the Church. Louis, tall and well built, with "the face of an angel and a mien



*The French royal domain, directly subject to the king, is the black territory on each map. English holdings are diagonally striped. The broken-line boundary represents the extent of the French king's feudal suzerainty.*

full of grace,"<sup>9</sup> is the perfect example of the true knightly king in the Middle Ages. It is true that Louis showed what more practical and unscrupulous minds might have called diplomatic naïveté in returning to England certain fiefs that had been annexed by his grandfather, Philip Augustus, but to St. Louis the supreme good was peace and justice, not conquests and diplomatic double-dealing.

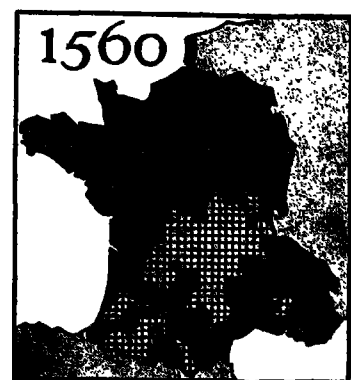
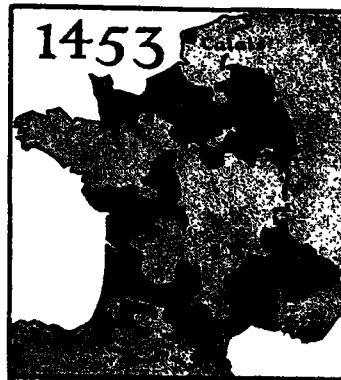
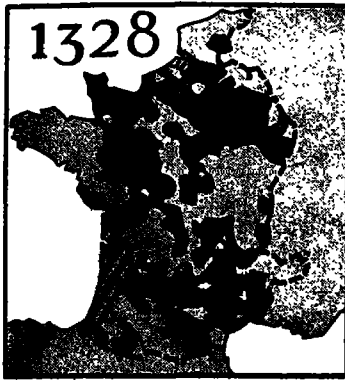
Such a viewpoint perhaps slowed up the process of territorial unification initiated by Philip Augustus, for little was added to the royal domain during the reign of St. Louis. But Louis gave to the French monarchy a moral dignity that had heretofore been lacking. In his sympathy for the suffering, in his eagerness for peace, and in his determination to give justice to all, St. Louis convinced the French people that the monarchy was the most important agency for assuring their happiness and well-being.

Louis' passion for justice was reflected in significant developments in the machinery of government. The improvements of Philip Augustus were carried a step further by the employment of officers called *enquêteurs*, who acted as the agents of the king in holding the local officials to a strict responsibility. The most important contribution of St. Louis was the building of a system of royal national courts. So important were Louis's judicial contributions that he is often referred to as the French Justinian. Like Henry II in England, Louis IX forced the nobles to recognize the right of their vassals to appeal to the king for justice in certain cases. He also declared private warfare and judicial duels illegal, and

the country now perceived that for justice and protection it must turn to the House of Capet.

**Philip IV (1285-1314).** The Capetian line became extinct in 1328, the reign of Philip IV, called Philip the Fair, climaxing three centuries of Capetian rule. Philip was the antithesis of his saintly grandfather. In him the virtues of justice and honesty were superseded by craft, violence, and deceit. Philip had two objectives, power and wealth, and he was utterly indifferent as to what methods he used to secure these aims. The reign of the last important Capetian monarch is notable for the struggle between the French monarchy and the papacy (see page 357) and, as in the reign of St. Louis, for the institutional growth of the state. Philip extended the practice initiated by Philip Augustus of surrounding himself with astute administrators, mainly recruited from the legal profession, who bent every effort to exalt the prestige and influence of the king at the expense of the nobles. Philip has been called France's first absolute monarch.

No criticism can be leveled at Philip's extension of the policies of his predecessors in improving the royal machinery of justice. In his reign, however, there is strong evidence of a callous indifference to justice and fair dealing, which strikes a new note in the history of the House of Capet. Much later the French people, although appreciating the achievements of their kings in uniting France, came to realize that their absolute monarchy could be as great a menace to the welfare of the state as the uncertainties of feudalism in the eleventh century.



*The royal domain was extended bit by bit, not always steadily, and the English were finally driven out. By 1560 only one powerful noble family remained—the Bourbons. Nearly all the checkered lands belonged to them.*

**The Hundred Years' War.** France was now to enter upon one of the most critical periods of her history. Fourteen years after the death of Philip the Fair the Capetian line became extinct, and the House of Valois succeeded to the throne. The succession precipitated a long and bloody war between England and France, waged off and on from 1337 to 1453—the Hundred Years' War already referred to. The English king, Edward III, maintained that through his mother, sister of the late French king, he was the legitimate heir to the French throne. The French nobility, however, maintained that women could not inherit estates or transmit them to a son. The kingship, therefore, was given to a cousin of the last king of the Capetian line. Edward's claim to the French throne was at best a pretext for war. The real cause of the war lay in the fact that Edward and his barons were thirsting for military glory. Another factor was the clash of the economic interests of France and England in Flanders, a region that was coming more and more under French control, to the chagrin of the English wool merchants who sent all their wool to that area.

During the Middle Ages England and France were at war intermittently for four hundred years. Later on there was another period of conflict which began with Louis XIV and ended with Napoleon, another Hundred Years' War. In spite of this legacy of enmity, in modern times—especially during the First World War, 1914-1918—Britain and France became for the most part friends and allies. Following her defeat at the hands of Germany in 1940, however, France was forced into a

position of collaboration with her victor and became alienated from Great Britain.

On such battlefields as Crécy, where yeomen and aristocrats fought together (1346), and Agincourt, when an army of 10,000 fought one three times its size (1415), complete victory was achieved by the English. Naturally these victories stimulated national pride. Time and time again it seemed that the English would entirely undo the work of the Capetians and that the building of a French nation would end in a tragic failure similar to those which took place in Germany and Italy later on. At the critical juncture an amazing thing happened. Impelled by "inward voices," believing that she was divinely inspired, Joan of Arc, a young girl of peasant origin, came to the French king to beg that she be allowed to lead an army to relieve the sorely besieged city of Orléans, whose capture by the English was almost a foregone conclusion. Joan of Arc was permitted to lead an army, to which she imparted a feeling of supreme confidence and a sense of the justice of its cause. Orléans was relieved, and soon the French everywhere were taking the offensive against the foreign invader.

The Maid of Orléans met a tragic end. Captured by English soldiers, she suffered a martyr's death at the stake while the French king remained shamefully indifferent. Nevertheless the work of Joan of Arc was done. The weakness of the English had been revealed. By 1453 they had lost every vestige of their holdings except the seaport of Calais. The end of the Hundred Years' War left France impoverished but with a new national consciousness. In the end the monarchy had saved France, and royal



*The precise line of a medieval tapestry traces the approach of Joan of Arc, with her soldiers, to the drawbridge over the moat at the Château Ginon in 1428. Note the knight at the entrance, the archer with the crossbow, and the standardbearers.*

power was stronger than it had ever been before. The long struggle with England had all but wiped out the old feudal nobility.

**French consolidation achieved.** The process of French consolidation was continued throughout the next century and a half. Louis XI (1461-1483), called the Spider King, labored to restore prosperity, to extend the royal domain, and to wreck completely the influence of the few powerful feudal houses that still remained to challenge his power. Louis was unscrupulous, parsimonious, and deceitful in his methods. Perhaps he merits the unflattering epithet applied to him by his enemies, but

he continued the program of statesmanship inaugurated some five hundred years earlier by his Capetian predecessors. Succeeding kings increased the royal territory bit by bit until by the middle of the sixteenth century only the Bourbon lands and a few other tiny holdings remained outside the royal realm (see map, page 417). These were incorporated in the kingdom when a Bourbon prince came to the throne in 1589. By the end of the sixteenth century France had become a strong national state. Many local institutions and customs—relics of feudalism—did persist, however, until the French Revolution in 1789.

### *The Political Unification of Spain*

**The course of Spanish history.** In the late Middle Ages Spain enjoyed a swift rise to power and for a century or more was the greatest national state in the western world. When we think of modern Spain, her past glory

is difficult to comprehend. In the last two hundred fifty years she has rapidly retrogressed in power and creativeness. In recent times Spain has been a byword for political corruption, aristocratic privilege, and widespread

poverty. Today, just emerging from one of the most cruel civil wars in the world's history, she is only a phantom of the sixteenth-century nation that dominated Europe, nearly conquered England, controlled much of Italy, and had the greatest colonial empire in the world.

**Mohammedan Spain.** When the Roman empire crumbled under the barbarian invasions in the fifth century, Visigothic tribes migrated to Spain and settled there. But they never succeeded in establishing a strong government. While Roman Spain had been prosperous and highly civilized, economic life declined under the Visigoths, as it did everywhere after the fall of the empire, and the kingdom became weaker.

Such a state of affairs was an open invitation to conquest. In our discussion of the expansion of Islam in Chapter 9 we saw how the Moslems came out of the desert of Arabia in the seventh century and soon swept west across the northern coast of Africa. In 711 the narrow strait separating Africa from Spain was crossed by the Mohammedan leader Tarik. Tarik subjugated Spain, leaving only a remnant of Christian influence in the mountainous northwestern part of the peninsula.

The lot of the conquered Christians was not especially bad. Christian worship, although curtailed, was allowed to continue, and, generally speaking, tolerance was meted out to all people—Christians, Jews, and Moslems. There was much intermarriage, and many of the later Moslem leaders were of Gothic or Roman descent. For some time the government of Spain centered in Damascus, but in 756 this connection was broken and Moslem Spain became an independent state.

Mohammedan civilization reached its height in the tenth century. The Caliphate of Cordova, as Mohammedan Spain was now called, endured brilliantly for a century. During that period Spain saw many economic and cultural advances. Grain growing flourished, water power was harnessed to drive mills, and new crops such as rice and sugar were introduced. Wine production and the making of olive oil also flourished. In certain sections of Moslem Spain the country resembled a prosperous garden, with fruit trees, vines, shrubs, and flowers everywhere.

Industry prospered. Spanish linens became famous, and Cordova became noted for its silks. Spanish leather goods, weapons, glass,



*In this seemingly unassailable castle, built to defend Spain against the Moors, Queen Isabella was crowned in 1474. Steep cliffs replace the traditional moat-and-drawbridge protection here.*

and tapestries were unmatched in Europe. It is said that Cordova in the tenth century was a city of half a million people and that it had three hundred public baths and a library of 400,000 volumes. Cordova was in a sense the intellectual center of the western world. Scholars from Christian Europe came to Moslem Spain to study, and through them much of the learning of the Arabs eventually passed to France and Italy. Cordova had the first paper factory in the west for bookmaking, and chemistry, pharmacy, and mathematics made notable advances.

Despite these accomplishments in the economic and intellectual fields, Mohammedan Spain was politically weak and disunited. Spain had been conquered not by one people but by a medley of Arabs, Syrians, Berbers, and Egyptians. The invaders themselves were outnumbered by the original Gothic population. After about the year 1000 the caliphs were a mediocre lot, and revolutions became the order of the day. In 1031 the Caliphate of Cordova was overthrown and twenty-three separate Moslem kingdoms took its place. This disunity gave the Christians their opportunity.

*The Christian kingdoms.* During the period of Moslem dominance a few Christian communities had managed to survive in the Pyrenees. The Mohammedans refused to take these puny outposts seriously at first and made no real attempts to extirpate them. Thus such little kingdoms as Leon and Aragon emerged. Charlemagne's invasion of Spain in 778 and establishment of Frankish Navarre in the northeast of the peninsula did much to protect the small Christian communities.

The first Christian kingdom to achieve any size was Leon. Pushing to the south, this state acquired additional lands, in which many castles were built for protection against the Moors. The new territory became known as Castile and in the tenth century was already more important than the original kingdom of Leon. By the twelfth century the kingdom of Aragon had driven the Moors from the northeast corner of Spain and had absorbed other small Christian states to become, with Castile, a Spanish kingdom. Portugal had appeared.

The unification of Spain was a more complex process than that of France and England. Here in addition to the customary rivalry between the feudal aristocracy and royal authority there was a religious crusade. Unification required the ejection of an alien religion and civilization from Spain. It also involved the union of several distinct diminutive nations, each possessing its own cultural characteristics.

*The Reconquista.* The collapse of the Caliphate of Cordova in 1031 inaugurated what is known as the *Reconquista*, the reconquest of the country by the Christian kingdoms. Common fear of the Mohammedans created in the Christians a sense of unity, the germs of national consciousness, and a deep hatred for the Moslems. The Christian church played an important part in the offensive against the Caliphate. In the ninth century northern Spain became suffused with a religious zeal. About 835 a bishop is reputed to have found the body of the apostle St. James in the northwestern part of Spain. Soon the site, known as Santiago de Compostela, was known as one of Europe's holiest shrines. Pilgrims by the thousands soon were coming to the shrine, and a great cathedral was built in honor of St. James. How better demonstrate one's faith than to drive the Moslems out?

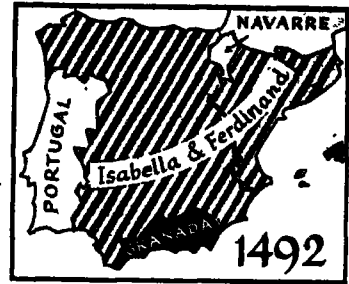
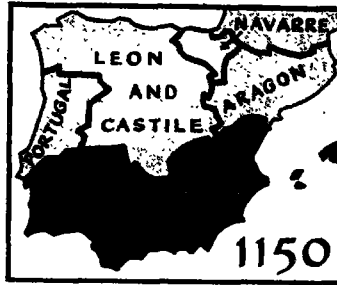
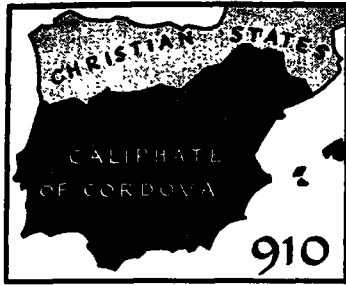
The *Reconquista* was, then, a kind of crusade. The clergy did everything possible to

encourage the struggle against the Moslems. The battle cry of the Christian soldiers was "Santiago," and banners were consecrated at the shrine. Knights from all over Europe, especially France, flocked to northern Spain to join the Christian forces. The shock troops of the *Reconquista* were the great Spanish military orders, such as Compostela and Calatrava, in which the functions of priest and knight were blended. Thus while Christian knights in the twelfth century were battling for the cross in the Holy Land, assisted by the great fighting orders such as the Knights Templars, another crusade headed by similar military orders was fighting in Spain.

In 1085 the important Moslem stronghold of Toledo was captured, and in 1212 a crushing defeat was inflicted upon the Mohammedans, from which they never recovered. A few years later Cordova and Seville were captured, and by the end of the thirteenth century Moorish influence was confined to Granada. During these struggles a steadily mounting patriotism became blended with a fanatical religious spirit. In France, Joan of Arc was the symbol of national reawakening; in Spain the great legendary figure was Rodrigo Diaz de Bivar. The exploits of this Castilian knight against the Mohammedan foe thrilled all Europe, and El Cid Campeador, as he is known, became the greatest hero in Spanish literature.

*Marriage of the monarchs.* Following the reduction of Mohammedan power to the small state of Granada, the process of reconquest halted until the latter part of the fifteenth century. In 1469 Isabella of Castile and Leon married Ferdinand, heir to the kingdom of Aragon. Within a decade both rulers had succeeded to their respective thrones, and by this personal union the Iberian peninsula became united politically, except for the Moslem fragment of Granada, the small state of Navarre, and the kingdom of Portugal (see map).

*Measures for centralization.* The keynote of the reign of Ferdinand and Isabella was political centralization. During the long struggles with the Moslems the nobles assumed extensive power, the military brotherhoods became practically independent organizations, and some of the great church officials were difficult to control. The Catholic Sovereigns, as Ferdinand and Isabella came to be called, proceeded with alacrity to establish an effective royal despotism in Spain. Their methods are



The territory of the Moors (black) gradually diminished as the Christian states slowly pushed them south. United Spain (striped) in 1492 drove the Moors from Spain altogether, in 1515 took over Navarre, in 1580 Portugal.

reminiscent of those used by Henry II in England and Philip Augustus in France. An organization called *La Santa Hermandad* (Holy Brotherhood) had existed for some time in Castile. It had originally been created by the cities for their mutual protection against unruly nobles. Now the Brotherhood was taken over by the crown and made into a combined standing army and police force. The great military orders, such as Compostela, were also brought under the crown. Although Ferdinand and Isabella were devout Catholics, they both believed that the power of the Church should be subordinate to royal government. By tactful negotiation on their part the Pope gave up to them extensive rights in making appointments to the Church in Spain.

During the Middle Ages assemblies known as *cortes* had grown up in the Spanish Christian kingdoms. These bodies resembled the English Parliament and the French Estates General. Spain had its *Magna Charta*, too, in the Ordinances of Leon, issued in 1188. Unlike the course of events in England, however, the early movement toward representative government in Spain lagged in the late Middle Ages and received a death blow from the Catholic Sovereigns in the last years of the fifteenth century. The towns lost their local powers and the *cortes* of the various kingdoms were ignored. In 1480 a Court of Inquisition was set up in Castile. Ferdinand and Isabella as devout Catholics saw in its use a method not only of extirpating heresy but also of increasing royal power. Ferdinand seems to have been especially interested in the prospect of confiscating the fortunes of condemned heretics. Thousands of persons were burned to death and many more lost all their property. For a short time the Inquisition in Spain may have

enhanced the power of the crown, but in the long run it caused many talented people to flee the country. Many who were helping to build up the country's economic resources were burned at the stake.

**The conquest of Granada.** The most dramatic act undertaken by the Catholic Sovereigns was the conquest of Granada. Having made up their minds to wipe out this last Moslem stronghold, Ferdinand and Isabella made their project a great Christian crusade. The king and queen went to the shrine of St. James to invoke divine blessing on the project, and a silver cross sent by the Pope was carried by the Christians. After ten years of hard fighting Granada fell in 1492. Constantinople had fallen to the Mohammedan Turks in 1453, and now all Europe rejoiced at this squaring of accounts with the followers of the Crescent.

**Foundations for greatness.** In 1504 Queen Isabella died and the territories of Castile passed under Ferdinand's control. Before his death in 1516 the king was able to seize that part of the kingdom of Navarre which lay south of the Pyrenees. Spain was now a national state, united under one sovereign. The year Granada fell Columbus discovered the New World and thus paved the way for Spanish acquisition of a tremendous amount of treasure and for valuable trade.

Ferdinand was an adept diplomat. He married his daughter Joanna to Philip, son of the Hapsburg emperor of the Holy Roman Empire, and a second daughter to Prince Henry of the English Tudor dynasty. The first of the marriage alliances was to bring Spain great influence in the sixteenth century. Ferdinand, notorious for his cunning and duplicity, promoted Spanish ambitions in Italy to the detriment of France. Machiavelli, in *The Prince*,





*A fifteenth-century Italian painting pictures the meeting of Frederic III of Sicily and his bride, Eleanor of Portugal. Such marriages—arranged usually without consulting the bridal pair—were common politics, an accepted part of diplomacy in that day.*

wrote of Ferdinand, "There is no better instance of a policy of hypocrisy."

**Legacies of unification.** The particular problems of Spanish unification had some unfortunate results: (1) Geography has had an appreciable effect upon Spanish political development. Just as the mountains of northern Spain cradled and protected the early Christian states, so in spite of the achievement of national unity, the distinct geographical areas into which Spain is divided resulted in a persistent spirit of localism and separatism which has come down to the present day. (2) The religious fanaticism which made the Reconquest a veritable crusade engendered in

the Spanish people an unfortunate tendency toward religious bigotry and intolerance. (3) Long centuries of fighting against the Mohammedans left behind the legacy of a warlike spirit and inordinate national pride. (4) Contempt for the Moorish unbelievers created a scorn among Spain's ruling classes for those activities in which the Moors engaged—trade, manufacturing, manual labor, and agriculture—a state of mind which was to play an important role in Spanish economic history.

**Portugal.** Up to 1095 the story of the area which eventually became Portugal was mingled with that of the entire peninsula. About 1050 the king of Castile and Leon, faced with a serious threat of Moslem invasion, appealed to Europe for aid. Count Henry of Burgundy answered the call and did valiant service against the Moslems. As a reward the count was given a Castilian princess for bride, whose dowry was composed of territory in west Castile. The successors of Count Henry gradually increased their power as counts of Portugal until in the thirteenth century one of them proclaimed himself king of Portugal. During the fourteenth century the rulers of Castile made strenuous attempts to reunite Portugal with their kingdom, but the Portuguese, with the assistance of English troops, defeated a strong Castilian army in 1385, decisively establishing their independence. King John the Great not only won the victory which established his country's independence but inaugurated its overseas expansion. This was to lead to the momentous voyages of Vasco da Gama, the creation of a great empire in India and the Far East, and the establishment of the important colony of Brazil in the New World. As the sixteenth century dawned, Portugal had high hopes of future national greatness. Her king could describe himself as "Lord of the conquest, navigation, and commerce of India, Ethiopia, Arabia, and Persia."

### *The Failure of the National State in Germany and Italy*

**Early Germany.** After the collapse of Charlemagne's empire, east of the Rhine the nation now known as Germany seemed to be crystallizing. Here the East Franks as early as 800 were calling themselves Germans and speaking a distinct language which could not be understood by their former kinsmen in France. Germany in the ninth and tenth cen-

turies was a loose political union of five governmental areas, Bavaria, Franconia, Saxony, Swabia, and Lorraine. Each was ruled by a duke who possessed his own army and governmental assembly and was to all intents and purposes a sovereign ruler. Decentralization had not reached the same degree in Germany as in France. Five duchies certainly were

preferable to the hodgepodge of feudal fiefs that lay in the way of national consolidation in France. But localism was bad enough in Germany. Numerous linguistic and racial differences, conflicting law codes, and varying customs acted as barriers to unity.

The attachment of the German peoples to their ancient tribal subdivisions—in short, their loyalty to Saxony or to Bavaria rather than to a central government—has colored the history of Germany from the days of Charlemagne to those of Hitler. Until very recent times certain sections, such as Bavaria and Saxony, have tenaciously clung to their old customs and traditions, which go back to tribal times. It is said that in 1914 when Germany was involved in the First World War many Bavarian peasants quite cheerfully went to war believing that they had been called to fight against their traditional enemies, the Prussians.<sup>10</sup>

**The Saxon line.** In spite of the independence of the great German duchies, there existed, as a holdover from Carolingian days, the tradition of kingship, the kings being chosen by the rulers of the great duchies. But throughout the ninth century monarchy was impotent in the land of the East Franks.

The first sign that kings were to play an important part in German history came in the reign of Henry the Fowler, the first king of the Saxon line. He was able to secure the submission of the rulers of the other great duchies. Henry's most important achievement was his work in stopping the invasions of Northmen, Hungarians, and Slavs that had been filtering into Germany ever since Charlemagne's empire went to pieces. Henry pushed back the Danes and led many campaigns against the Slavs. Along the frontier, strongholds, or marks, were created as protection against such hostile peoples as the Magyars, Slavs, and Danes.

Henry the Fowler was succeeded in 936 by his son Otto the Great. This ruler, who, interestingly enough, had married the granddaughter of Alfred the Great of England, set to work immediately to carry on the policies of his father. Otto was successful in extending royal authority and securing the submission of the German nobility. There were several serious revolts, but Otto was more than able to hold his own. Like his father he encouraged expansion to the east against the Slavs. For hundreds of years German colonists, impelled

by the desire for land, moved to the east. It has been estimated that sixty per cent of German territory before the First World War had been taken from the Slavs. In the year 955 Otto defeated the Hungarians, who then retired to the east and settled down in what is now Hungary.

The most momentous action taken by Otto was his intervention in Italian affairs. Italy in the tenth century was a tempting field for an invader. The country was weak, divided into rival warring factions, and rich. Otto first interfered in Italian affairs in 951 and was crowned Roman emperor by the Pope in the year 962. Undoubtedly Otto was excited by the grandiose idea of re-creating the empire which had been established by Charlemagne. Later the new political creation was given the high-sounding title of Holy Roman Empire. For hundreds of years parts of Italy and Germany formed one empire. Even later similarities in the development of Germany and Italy can be adequately understood only by reference to the medieval period. The long-delayed national unification of each was achieved at the same time, 1870.

**Henry IV and Pope Gregory VII.** The tragic consequences of German kings pursuing empire rather than building an effective monarchy at home are first apparent in the reign of the Franconian ruler Henry IV (1056-1106). In 1073 Pope Gregory VII, a stern and ascetic idealist, came to Rome, determined to subordinate the authority of kings to that of God's vicars on earth, the Popes. The issue was joined on the question of lay investiture, as we have already seen, and at Canossa in 1077 the Pope won a temporary victory. But the struggle continued and reached its height during the Hohenstaufen rule of Germany.

**The Hohenstaufens and Italy.** Frederick Barbarossa, founder of the Hohenstaufen house, who was emperor from 1152 to 1190, considered himself even more than did his predecessors the successor of the Caesars, Charlemagne, and Otto. His ambition was to restore the glory of the Roman empire. Such an objective caused a renewal of the conflict with the papacy. The rising Italian cities, who disliked paying tribute to a German king, prepared to resist Frederick's pretensions.

On four occasions German armies led by Frederick failed to crush the Italian coalition, which was supported by the papacy and the

Italian communes. All the plans for making Italy an integral part of the empire went for naught, and Frederick wasted much wealth and effort which could have been utilized to much better purpose in strengthening the position of the monarchy in Germany. So far the Popes, subscribing to the viewpoint of Gregory VII, had easily held their own against the emperors. But they were not to rest content. A new development made it vital to the papacy that the Hohenstaufens be destroyed.

This was the marriage of Frederick's son to the heiress of the Sicilian kingdom, greatly augmenting Hohenstaufen power. The papacy now lay between two Hohenstaufen states, Germany and the kingdom of Sicily. Hohenstaufen encirclement of the papacy would be complete. It fell to the lot of Frederick's grandson to meet the challenge of the papacy against the increased Hohenstaufen empire. That grandson was Frederick II, one of the most interesting and brilliant figures in history. His court at Palermo was the center of perhaps the most advanced culture of the time, and Sicily, as a result of the progressive administration of its ruler, became one of the best-governed states in Europe.

In 1239 the last chapter in the struggle between the empire and the papacy began. Revolt was inspired by Frederick's enemies both in Italy and Germany, and although the emperor was able to hold his own, he did so with increasing difficulty. In 1250, while the struggle still raged, Frederick died. After his death his empire crumbled to pieces. His descendants fought desperately to escape annihilation but to no avail. In 1265 the Pope made an alliance with Charles of Anjou, the brother of the king of France, in which he offered Charles the kingdom of Sicily as a reward for ridding Italy of the Hohenstaufens. Charles succeeded in defeating the Hohenstaufen forces in battle in 1266, and two years later young Conradin, the grandson of Frederick II, was captured and cruelly put to death.

*The decline of the empire.* After the fall of the Hohenstaufens Germany lapsed more and more into political disunity. The country in the later Middle Ages was characterized by interminable civil wars, lawlessness, and private warfare. The Holy Roman Empire never again achieved the brilliance it had enjoyed in the reign of Frederick Barbarossa. The emperors usually did not try to interfere in Ital-

ian affairs. In fact, the practice of going to Rome to receive the imperial crown from the Pope died out. The last German king to carry out the tradition was Frederick III in the fifteenth century. Even in German affairs the emperors no longer tried to assert their word over the noble families, which were becoming more and more powerful. To all intents the Holy Roman Empire was dead, and the contrast between the empire in theory and in practice became more and more manifest.

*The early Hapsburgs.* In 1273 the imperial crown had been revived and given to Count Rudolf of the house of Hapsburg. This family played a prominent part in European history. Rudolf's ancestors had gained control of a small domain in northern Switzerland. Toward the end of the eleventh century the family built a castle which was called Habichtsburg (Castle of the Hawk); hence the word Hapsburg. During the late Middle Ages and in early modern times the house of Hapsburg had amazing luck in adding to the ancestral lands. Austria, with its important city of Vienna, was acquired in the thirteenth century, and soon Bohemia, Hungary, and other territories were obtained by the Hapsburgs, who presided over their Austrian empire from Vienna. It was an empire only because the Hapsburg ruler, archduke of Austria, was at the same time emperor of the Holy Roman Empire.

*The Golden Bull.* The political constitution in Germany can best be understood by reference to the document known as the Golden Bull, which laid down the procedure for the election of the emperor by seven great German princes. These great nobles, such as the king of Bohemia and the duke of Saxony, were given rights that made them virtually independent rulers. The emperor could no longer tax in the empire; independent princes could even issue their own coinage. An imperial Diet, or legislature, gave some semblance of governmental unity. But it met infrequently and had little authority. It became more and more common to speak of the Germanies, not Germany. By the fifteenth century Germany was a welter of archduchies, margravates, counties, duchies, and many free cities.

The Golden Bull crystallized political disunity. Unification under a single all-powerful government was not to be achieved in Germany proper for over five hundred years after

the promulgation of the Golden Bull in 1356.

**Movements for reform.** In the fifteenth century the German imperial crown came again into the possession of the Hapsburgs, after having been held by members of the house of Luxemburg from 1347 to 1437. Frederick of Hapsburg was made emperor in 1452, and from this time until 1806, when the Holy Roman Empire disappeared, this house held the imperial crown almost without a break. During the fifteenth century there was a strong demand from many quarters in the empire for some kind of political reform, the purpose being the creation of an effectual authority. In 1439 a citizen of Mainz wrote:

"We have a good constitution, good laws, and good traditionary customs. What we want is power to carry out those laws in the supreme and lower courts. We also want a permanent army under the guidance of leaders who, brave and zealous for right, will ever be ready to see that the law is upheld and its sentences executed without flinching; and the robber barons rooted out of the land. . . . As long as the Emperor is dependent on the caprices of the princes, and is without an army and sufficient revenue to carry out his government, neither right nor justice can prevail."<sup>11</sup>

During the reign of Maximilian I (1493-1519) a serious attempt at reform was made. In 1495 the Diet of Worms outlawed private warfare. An imperial court was set up in order to settle the many feuds, and steps were taken to insure the annual meeting of the imperial Diet, but the Diet failed to enforce its will.

**The Hapsburgs and the Germanies.** The Hapsburgs obtained little comfort from being the head of the Holy Roman Empire. More and more this dynasty concentrated on the increase of its family possessions and its own power. The marriage of Maximilian to Mary of Burgundy added the rich possession of the Netherlands to the Hapsburg domain and helped make this family the most potent force in political affairs in sixteenth-century Europe. As Germany approached early modern times, she was at a great disadvantage in comparison with such relatively unified states as England, France, and Spain. In early medieval times such rulers as Henry the Fowler and Otto the Great had started Germany on her way to becoming the strongest state in Europe in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. But early promise was not fulfilled, and in 1500

the area was not Germany but several states collectively known as the Germanies.

**Rise of the Swiss state.** An interesting feature of the medieval German empire was the emergence of Switzerland, which became a national state in the fifteenth century. During the time of the emperor Frederick II, two peasant communities high on the Alps were permitted to become self-governing cantons subject to the overlordship of the emperor. A little over fifty years later these little cantons were hard put to maintain their rights against the Hapsburg emperors. In 1291 three cantons agreed to a Perpetual Compact, directed against Rudolf of Hapsburg.

But the Hapsburg leaders were determined to bring the Swiss peasants to heel and in 1315 led an army against their puny antagonists. The aroused mountain men gave a good account of themselves, hurled heavy boulders down the passes against the knights in the Hapsburg army, and thoroughly defeated it. The success of the three cantons caused other communities to join the little political union, a Confederation whose members kept their local institutions but were pledged to joint action for defense against a common foe.

In 1394 the independence of the Swiss Confederation was virtually recognized by the Hapsburgs. While the struggle for independence had been going on, the spirit of nationalism had been growing in the cantons. An inspiring story developed, at first sung in ballad form, which told of the bravery of William Tell and his great skill with the bow. Perhaps it is only a legendary tale, but to the Swiss people William Tell became the symbol of their pride of nationality. Another Swiss hero was Arnold von Winkelried, who is supposed to have hurled himself against the lances of the Hapsburgs, thus opening a way for the charge of the Swiss soldiers. Legend relates the exploit in these words:

"Make way for liberty," he cried,

"Make way for liberty," and died.

In the fifteenth century the Confederation increased to thirteen cantons, and the Emperor Maximilian renounced all sovereignty over them in the Treaty of Basel (1499). It was not until the Peace of Westphalia, however, that Switzerland was formally recognized as an independent state.

**Italy in the late Middle Ages.** Although we have touched upon the history of Italy in con-

nection with the efforts of the German kings to build up a great empire and have perhaps already sensed the general trends of politics in medieval Italy, it will be worth while to discuss the topic more at length. The outstanding fact in Italy during the Middle Ages was the flourishing condition of her cities and the remarkable development of her commerce. The basis for her prosperity has already been discussed in Chapter 12 with the rise of city life in Europe. Another feature of Italian life as the Middle Ages drew to a close was the outpouring of art and literature.

But though Italy was a leader in commerce and art in the late Middle Ages, she presented a sorry spectacle in politics. If we go back as far as Theodoric, we recall that the Ostrogothic leader created a strong and united kingdom in Italy. The collapse of his kingdom at the hands of the Byzantine emperor Justinian, however, broke the peninsula into petty states. Again in the days of Charlemagne nearly all of Italy was incorporated into the Frankish empire except the southern portion, held by the Byzantine empire, and Sicily, conquered by the Saracens between 827 and 877.

After the waning of Carolingian power Italy was again broken up. There was the old Lombard kingdom in the north; the Papal States and other principalities lay in the center; the territory in the south was divided between the Byzantine empire and the Saracens. In addition to these political divisions an independent urban life developed in such centers as Venice, Florence, Pisa, and Genoa.

**The Normans in Sicily.** The most important political event in Italy after the collapse of the Carolingian empire was the Norman conquest of the southern part of the peninsula. Norman adventurers returning from pilgrimages to the Holy Land stopped to break their journey in Italy. Here they assisted the people in the south to throw off the Byzantine yoke and push back the Saracens. The news was brought to Normandy that Italy was a land where a knight could easily acquire a comfortable estate, provided he had a sword and a strong right arm. It seems that there was a surplus of young knights in Normandy at this time, eager for excitement and a chance to make their fortunes. One famous Norman knight had twelve husky sons, six of whom went to Italy. Two of these became famous—Robert Guiscard—the “Crafty”—a blond giant

renowned for his military prowess, and his brother Roger, also a famous warrior.

The Norman conquest of Sicily began in 1017 and was completed just after the battle of Hastings, in which the duke of the Normans acquired England for his house. The final result of the incursion of the Norman adventurers into Italy was that Robert Guiscard carved out for himself a dukedom in the south and assisted his brother in making himself ruler of Sicily. In 1127, following the extinction of the line of Robert, the two states were merged into the kingdom of Naples and Sicily.

**Norman administration.** In the Kingdom of Naples and Sicily the Normans created a remarkably well-governed state. A centralized administration presided over by efficient civil servants was set up. The tax system was particularly just and well administered, and the army was a royal force always ready for service, not an undependable feudal levy. So advanced was the government that the Norman kingdom has been called the first modern state in Europe. It is interesting that at the time the Normans were establishing a modern government in Sicily they were doing the same thing in England. As early as 1225 a parliament was established in the Kingdom of Naples and Sicily; it antedates the famous Model Parliament called in England in 1295. In the thirteenth century a famous code of laws was promulgated also. In it ran the principle that the ideal function of laws is to prevent crime rather than punish it.

The Norman kingdom, -situated in the middle of the Mediterranean, was the meeting ground for cultures—Christian, Greek, and Saracen, invited by the tolerance of the Norman regime. We have already said something of the brilliant civilization that flourished here during the reign of the famous Frederick II. At his court scholars from both Europe and the east, many of whom were quite free from religious tradition, gathered to carry on disputations. Frederick's chancellor, Pier della Vigna, is supposed to have written:

The life of holy prelates is abominably funny,  
Their hearts are full of venom while their  
tongues are dropping honey:  
They pipe a pretty melody, and so approach  
discreetly,  
And offer you a cordial, mixed with poison,  
very sweetly.<sup>12</sup>

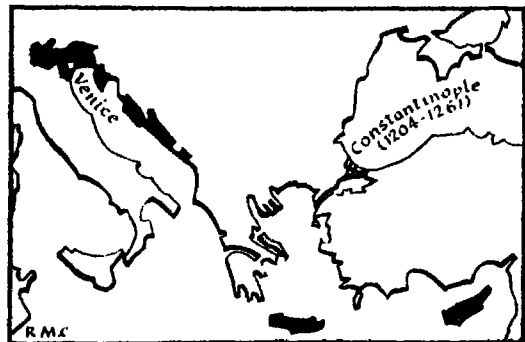
The Norman kingdom of Naples and Sicily might have proved to be what Italy most needed, for it was an efficient centralized government in the hands of benevolent, cultured kings. The kingdom might have developed for Italy what the Normans had achieved in England, a single national monarchy, but this was not to be. The kingdom of Naples and Sicily became involved in the disastrous struggle between the Empire and the papacy. We have already seen how Henry VI, emperor of the Holy Roman Empire, married Constance of Sicily and how as a result of the union their son Frederick became not only king of Naples and Sicily but also emperor of the Holy Roman Empire. Following the struggle between Frederick and the papacy, upon Frederick's death the Pope invited the count of Anjou to seize the kingdom of Naples and Sicily, something he did with alacrity.

**Angevin and Spanish rule.** Angevin rule was very unpopular in the southern kingdom. In Sicily, especially, the people had little use for the counts of Anjou with their alien French officials, and in 1282 at Palermo the Sicilians, at the hour of vespers, rose up and murdered every Frenchman they could lay hands on. The massacre has gone down in history as the Sicilian Vespers. As a result of the uprising the Sicilian throne went to Peter of Aragon, who had married into the Hohenstaufen line of Frederick II. The two kingdoms were now separate, one in Sicily and one in southern Italy. In 1443 Naples was conquered by Alfonso of Aragon, who again united the kingdoms of Sicily and Naples. The reunion brought little respite to the unhappy kingdom, for Spaniards representing the House of Aragon and Frenchmen representing the Angevins struggled intermittently for its possession for another century.

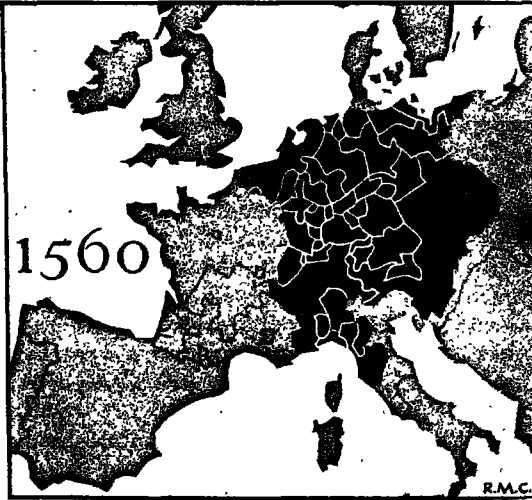
**The Italian city-states.** While the tragedy of the kingdom of Naples and Sicily was being enacted, another important development was taking place in northern Italy. The Italian cities, or communes, were coming forward as a factor in Italian politics. In the twelfth century the Hohenstaufen emperors began to assert their authority over the rising cities. Determined to preserve their independence, the communes organized the Lombard League, and, allying themselves with the papacy, they succeeded in defeating the efforts of the emperors to impose their authority.

Italy after the Hohenstaufen failure consisted of a number of small city-states. In the south there was the kingdom of Naples and Sicily; in the center were the Papal States and the Tuscan republics of Siena and Florence; and in the north were the flourishing communes of Venice, Milan, and Genoa. The city-state at the close of the Middle Ages came more and more to be the characteristic political unit in Italy. The once-small towns spread out, got control over surrounding territory, and in certain cases even ruled other towns (see the map below). The Italian city-states were similar to those of ancient Greece. The prevailing spirit was political individualism. Each city was intensely self-conscious, viewing its neighbors with a jealousy that often flared into open war. Within each city there was also much factionalism. During the struggles between the Empire and the papacy the supporters of the emperors were called Ghibellines and those of the Popes were called Guelphs.

**Experiments in government.** In this period Italian cities experimented in various forms of government—monarchy, theocracy, and republican democracy. There was much trial and error in the art of government. One authority lists "single and plural executive, direct and indirect election, electoral qualifications and universal suffrage, class representation, proportional representation, long term and short term in office, rotation in offices."<sup>13</sup> It is one of the ironies of history that a people who so early began to build the machinery of government in the direction of democracy



*Enterprising Italian towns, led by Venice, were building "empires" single-handed before feudal Europe had begun to build nations. These "empires" were established mainly to protect the lucrative Mediterranean trade which the Italian cities enjoyed and over which they fought each other in bitter commercial wars.*



*In 1560 England, Spain, and France were maturing national states. Italy and Germany were still collections of small states and cities. The Holy Roman Empire was largely a fiction.*

should never have been able to make a success of representative government in modern times.

In spite of the forms of government that existed in theory, the actual power in the city-states more and more gravitated in the direction of one-man rule. Prominent families came to power in most of the cities and provided the political bosses or despots that ran the government. Behind the scenes rival families carried on bitter duels for power, accompanied by poisonings, stabbing forays, and civil war. In many of these struggles, both within the cities and between the communes, mercenary soldiers were used under the command of leaders called *condottieri*. These adventurers came from all over Europe, selling their swords to the highest bidder. One of the most famous was an Englishman, Sir John Hawkwood, whose army, called the White Company, played an important part in Italian politics in the latter part of the fourteenth century. The feuds both within and between cities apparently did little to hinder commercial progress. Mercenaries saw to it that the petty wars were not too destructive.

Milan is one example of the Italian city-state ruled by a suave despot, unscrupulous in politics and a patron of the arts. For many years the state was ruled by the Visconti family, whose coat of arms appropriately had a serpent in its design. Venice was nominally a republic but was in reality an oligarchy, ruled by a small clique. Her government originally consisted of a *doge* (duke) plus a general assembly consisting of all the people, but in the twelfth century the rich merchants deprived the *doge* of his power and retained him merely as a figurehead. Venice was the pearl of the city-states. In the fifteenth century she had three thousand ships, manned by a great army of sailors on the seas. Her vast commerce and wealth enabled her to play an important role in international affairs. This little state first began the practice of sending regular ambassadors to the courts of European states.

Another important city was Florence. In theory a democracy, it was in practice controlled by a small group of rich merchants. Leadership was assumed by the famous Medici family, who maintained their power by a clever combination of benevolence and ruthlessness. Under Lorenzo de Medici (1478-1492) Florence became the richest artistic and intellectual center of the Renaissance.

**Italy's downfall.** At the close of the fifteenth century Italy was the envy of her neighbors with her wealth, refinement, and art. Back of several of the kings of Europe were compact states. A weapon was at hand for unscrupulous rulers, who sized up Italy as a rich country bulging with plunder, without the political power to keep out an invader. There were some thoughtful Italians who realized the danger, but the warnings of such men as Dante and Petrarch went unheeded. A new and a dreadful era dawned for Italy as the fifteenth century came to a close. In 1494 Charles VIII of France, claiming the throne of Naples, invaded Italy. In 1499 his son, Louis XII, also undertook a marauding expedition against some of the Italian states. For more than three hundred years afterward Italy's history is one of retrogression, impotence, and alien rule.

### *Elsewhere in Europe*

**Baltic peoples.** North of Germany, clustered about the Baltic, lay the so-called lands of heathendom. In the year 1000, the Scandi-

navian people were just coming into the pages of recorded history and crystallizing into three separate kingdoms, Norway, Denmark, and

Sweden. To the east, along the shores of the Baltic, possessing no political unity, lived the Prussians and Lithuanians, while farther north were the Esthonians and Finns.

By the fifteenth century Denmark had become the leading kingdom in Scandinavia, and her king, by the union of Calmar in 1397, was also ruler of Norway and Sweden. In 1523 Danish influence was expelled from Sweden, which now became a powerful national state. But Norway, together with the old Norse settlements of Iceland and Greenland, remained tied to Denmark.

**Middle Europe.** Almost in the center of the European continent were the Bohemians, a Slavic people who had established themselves in the Bohemian plain behind two protective chains of mountains about the fifth century. During the ninth and tenth centuries Slavic peoples, of whom the Czechs were most important, established a kingdom on the Bohemian plain. The Czechs, nearly surrounded by Teutonic peoples, have struggled for a thousand years against the menace of German domination. In 1471 the Bohemian nobles elected a Polish prince as their king, and in 1490 this same ruler also became the king of Hungary. Since he maintained his seat of government at Budapest, the Hungarian capital, Bohemia passed very largely under foreign influence. Another change in political fortunes came in 1526, when the king of Bohemia was killed in battle against the Turks. Terrified at the prospect of Mohammedan rule, the Czechs offered their vacant throne to a Hapsburg prince. Although the Czechs retained their local institutions, their government for nearly four hundred years was centered in Vienna.

To the northeast of Bohemia was the duchy of Poland, which had been welded into a strong military state by the middle of the tenth century because of pressure from the Germans. In 1386, by marriage and election, the ruler of the Lithuanians became king of Poland. This personal union of the two states continued until 1560, when they were merged into one kingdom. Thus Poland at the end of the Middle Ages was a large, powerful state.

To the southeast of Bohemia, situated in the wide and fertile plain known as Hungary, were an Asiatic people called the Magyars. These Hungarians were for many years the terror of eastern Europe, harrying their neighbors by

wild and brutal raids. In 955, however, they were defeated in battle by the German king Otto, and from that time, gradually hemmed in by powerful neighboring states, the Magyars began to adopt a settled mode of life. Under their king St. Stephen I (997-1038), a statesman with great ability and vision, Hungary made great progress in bettering her governmental system, improving agriculture, and advancing culture. Above all, she became Christian.

The Magyars, ruled for a time by capable and conscientious men, might have become a nation had it not been for the nobility, which was sufficiently influential to block a centralized government. The state was further weakened by the conquest and inclusion of unruly racial elements—Croats, Slovaks, and Rumanians. Hungary received her most serious setback when, in 1526, her king—also ruler of Bohemia—fell in battle against the Turks. Hungary was now carved into three portions: one ruled by the Turkish sultan, a small segment by a native prince, and the third by the archduke of Austria. This intertwining of the fortunes of Austria, Bohemia, and Hungary explains how, at the time the Turks were ejected from much of southeastern Europe in early modern times, the Hapsburgs at Vienna came to rule over a polyglot empire of Bohemian, Hungarian, and Austrian peoples.

**Early Russia.** A Slavic people whose original home was north of the Carpathian mountains furnished the raw material out of which Russia was to evolve. In the seventh century these Slavs spread over the great eastern plain which stretches from the Black Sea to the Gulf of Finland. By the year 800 they had many important settlements along the Dnieper and Volga rivers. The real history of Russia begins when venturesome Swedish Vikings came down the Dnieper to trade with the Byzantine empire. These Norsemen were called Varangians, or *Russ*, by the Slavs.

The Viking warriors were given the responsibility of protecting Slav trade and settlements from attack and of carrying on judicial and administrative duties. In a short space of time the Varangian leaders and their fighting men adopted the language and customs of the Slavic people. Under the leadership of the Viking princes a number of Varangian principalities were created, especially at Novgorod and Kiev. At Novgorod in 862 a Swedish chieftain named Rurik established a state which was the genesis



of the Russia we know today. By 900 this Varangian state had spread its power over most of the Russian plain.

But the successors of Rurik failed to create a unified kingdom. In the thirteenth century the whole country fell under an invasion of Mongols from the east. The task of routing Mongol influence was assumed by the grand dukes of Moscow. As Mongol power declined, in the fourteenth century, these rulers began not only to challenge Mongol rule but also to extend Russian claims in neighboring states. To Ivan the Great (1462-1505) goes the credit for placing all Russia under one authority and emancipating his people from the Mongols. At about the time that the Tudors came to the English throne (1485), Russia was also emerging as a national state.

**The Balkans.** In the Balkan peninsula about 1000 A.D. there existed only confusion, racial diversity, and intermittent warfare. Bulgarians, Serbs, and Croats—to name the most important Balkan peoples—created ephemeral states, and although some rulers, especially in Bulgaria, dreamed of uniting the diverse Balkan peoples into one great nation, their efforts were fruitless. The multiplicity of small countries in the Balkans in modern times is a legacy of their failure, and the tensions and conflicts resulting from that state of affairs were to make of the Balkan peninsula “a danger zone of Europe,” a source of constant worry to European diplomats, and, as in 1914, the direct or indirect cause of conflict.

**The declining Byzantine empire.** Clinging precariously to a foothold in Europe and in constant danger of being driven out of Asia Minor by the Saracens was the Byzantine empire. After its days of glory and expansion under the emperor Justinian in the sixth century this proud empire with its capital at Constantinople lapsed into decadence. Then came a revival in the eighth and ninth centuries which, culminating in the reign of Basil II (976-1025), restored Byzantine power to its

highest point since the days of Justinian. It is significant that while the rest of Europe presented a picture of feudal decentralization, the Byzantine empire was a closely knit, highly centralized government with an efficient bureaucracy. The Byzantine revival, however, was short-lived; a rapid and unarrested decline set in in the twelfth century.

The outstanding political development in southeastern Europe at the close of the Middle Ages, then, was the disappearance of the Byzantine empire and the emergence of a great Mohammedan state which not only became heir to the lands formerly ruled by the Christian emperors at Constantinople but also to the whole Balkan area. Some reference to this expansion of Turkish power has already been mentioned in relation to our discussion of Byzantine and Moslem civilizations in Chapters 8 and 9. The fortunes of this new power had been laid by a young Turkish chieftain named Osman, who ruled from 1326 to 1359. His followers called themselves *Osmanli* (sons of Osman), a term we have changed to *Ottoman*. Driving north in 1354, the Turks crossed the Bosphorus into Europe. Serbs opposed them but were routed in a bloody battle in 1389. The southern Balkans fell to the Turks.

Constantinople, last remnant of Byzantine power, held out until 1453, when it too succumbed. St. Sophia, once the glory of eastern Christendom, became a Mohammedan mosque. The close of the fifteenth century saw the Ottoman Turks in complete control of the Balkans and pushing on toward Vienna. A great new empire with its center at Constantinople, comparable to that created by Justinian in the sixth century, was now ruled by the Ottoman sultans. It was in no sense a national state but a bewildering mixture of Turks, Serbs, Hungarians, Bulgarians, Rumanians, Armenians, and Jews. The imposition of Turkish rule upon southeastern Europe delayed the rise of national states in the Balkan area until the nineteenth century.

### Summary

Following the collapse of Charlemagne's empire a disjointed political system called feudalism endeavored to carry on the essential functions of government. Although better than no government at all, feudalism was weak. It was destined that a new political organization should supersede it, the segregation of peoples into independent units called national states.

The architects of the national states were efficient and aggressive monarchs. At first often overshadowed by powerful nobles, the kings established efficient governments consisting of (1) a professional civil service, (2) a standing army which made the ruler independent of feudal barons for troops, (3) a well-organized treasury department, and, above all, (4) a national system of courts. Assisting the kings in their struggle against the feudal barons was the development among their subjects of a sentimental attachment to the crown and the nation. England and France are especially good examples of the process of nation making. In England the achievements of William the Conqueror, Henry II, and Edward I were important; in France, significant work was done by Louis le Gros, St. Louis, and Philip Augustus. Spanish unification took on the distinctive aspect of a religious crusade, which culminated in the union of the country in the reign of Ferdinand and Isabella.

Whereas in England, France, Portugal, Spain, and the Scandinavian peninsula the monarchs succeeded in making themselves supreme over united states, in Italy and Germany efforts to create a national state were a failure. The most important single factor explaining the result was the ill-fated ambition of the German kings to recreate a great empire reminiscent of Charlemagne's. The efforts of Otto the Great, Frederick Barbarossa, and Frederick II failed in the face of resistance from the Italian cities, treachery of the German nobles, and the opposition of the papacy. Unlike England and France, Germany and Italy at the end of the Middle Ages were disunited.

By the end of the fifteenth century the national state had become a reality in Europe, despite opposition from feudal nobles and the international institution of the Church, with whose collective interests the state clashed. Proof of its reality is the fact that the Catholic Church, at the Council of Constance (1414-1418), utilized the method of voting by nations, not by individuals. The dissolution of religious unity in Christendom culminated in the Protestant Revolt, about which we shall hear more in Chapter 17. By 1500 France, Spain, Portugal, and England were outstanding national units. But nationalism was to grow even stronger in the three centuries of geographical exploration, of conquest, and of bitter warfare that followed.

## RENAISSANCE THOUGHT AND ART: 1300-1600

1300-1500

### Early Renaissance in Italy

Revival of interest in the affairs of this world:

Humanism

Renaissance authors reflect Humanist thought in their writings

Early sculpture and architecture developed

Early painting turns to secular art; perspective used

Renaissance patronage fosters art

Petrarch, *Secrets*, *Africa*, *Familiar Letters*; Boccaccio, *Decameron*

Ghiberti; Pisano, *Presentation and Flight to Egypt*; Brunelleschi, dome of cathedral at Florence; Donatello, *Statue of Gattamelata*

Veneziano; Fra Angelico; Verrocchio; Cimabue, "Madonna and Child"; Duccio, "The Betrayal of Judas"; Giotto, "St. Francis Preaching to the Birds"; Masaccio, "Expulsion of Adam and Eve"; Gozzoli, "Journey of the Magi"; Botticelli, "Spring"

Recruited from Princes, wealthy townsmen, Popes

1450-1550

### Renaissance in Other Countries

1448

Movable type used in Europe

1466-1536

Erasmus influences intellectual Europe

1478-1535

Epoch-making book written by Thomas More

1495-1553

Rabelais attacks hypocrisy

Detail and realism outstanding in painting

Gutenberg

*In Praise of Folly*

*Utopia*

*The Inestimable Life of the Great Gargantua, Father of Pantagruel*

Van Eyck, "Madonna and Child"; Dürer, "Hieronymus Holzschuher"; Holbein, "Erasmus of Rotterdam"; Breughel, "The Massacre of the Innocents"; "The Wedding Dance"

1500-1530

### High Renaissance

1469-1527

New political theory developed by Machiavelli

Architecture shows development of a style which took inspiration from buildings of classical times

Sculpture shows great progress

Glorification of the human body

Painting develops to become the crowning glory of the Renaissance

*The Prince*

St. Peter's cathedral built: Bramante, Michelangelo

Palazzo Farnese built: Sangallo, Michelangelo

Michelangelo, Tombs of the Medici; Cellini, salt cellar of Francis I

Bellini; Veronese; Tintoretto; da Vinci, "Virgin of the Rocks," "Mona Lisa," "The Last Supper"; Raphael, "The School of Athens"; Michelangelo, Sistine Chapel; Giorgione, "Pastoral Concert"; Titian, "Pope Paul III"

1530-1600

### Later Renaissance

16th century

Great period of Elizabethan literature

Sidney, *Arcadia*; Spenser, *Faerie Queene*; Marlowe, *Doctor Faustus*; Jonson, *Every Man in His Humor*; Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, *King Lear*, *Othello*; Bacon, *The New Atlantis*; Montaigne, *Essays*

1533-1592

Educational psychologist; essayist

## CHAPTER 16

# *Man Is the Measure*



**T**HE term "Renaissance" means literally rebirth. Until recent times, men have looked upon the age which bears the name as a "sudden turning on of the light after some centuries of darkness." Today we know that the Middle Ages were anything but "dark ages" because, as we have seen, medieval thought and art made rich contributions to our modern culture. Furthermore, we know that there was no revolutionary change in the development of European culture from the fourteenth to the sixteenth centuries. But these centuries did witness the gradual shift from a purely medieval viewpoint to a modern one and saw the quickening of human activity in nearly every phase of man's life.

In a narrow sense, the Renaissance was a new and intense interest in the art and learning of Greece and Rome, to the disparagement of the Middle Ages. The Renaissance scholars, called Humanists, imitated everything classical, loved the past, "were less interested in the present, and not at all in the future." This phase of the Renaissance was really regressive, for it looked backward in history toward antiquity. But the Renaissance in its broader aspects was a stimulation of interest in discoveries by explorers and scientists, a new urban culture of the rising middle class, new advances in statecraft and the growth of the national states, new concepts in literature and art, and a lively interest in secular affairs as contrasted with the otherworldliness of the Middle Ages. In its broad sense the Renaissance was progressive, for it looked forward in history and laid the foundations of our modern civilization.

The Renaissance was an age of transition, a transition from medievalism with its emphasis on Scholasticism, church authority, and asceticism to modernism with its em-

phasis on science, skepticism, and individualism. The Renaissance was also a transition from a relatively static to a dynamic culture, from a society based on feudal, rural, and monastic ideals to one based on an individualistic, urban, and secular pattern. The Middle Ages tended to look upon the world as sinful and human nature as destined to be repressed; the modern age looks upon the world as vital and invites human nature to be expressed. In the Renaissance we find an intermingling of the two ideals. The common people remained illiterate and clung to the ways of their forefathers; the relatively few who had acquired education and the new culture revolted from medievalism. In this chapter we shall deal almost entirely with the latter group, for they heralded the modern world.

### *The Early Renaissance in Italy (1300-1500)*

**The waning of the Middle Ages.** The Middle Ages were waning throughout Europe in the fourteenth century. The Church was split with schism and heresy; its international power was slowly but surely giving way before the rise of powerful monarchies. Trade was increasing among Mediterranean seaports and along the rivers of central Europe, bringing with it the rise of towns and growing wealth, new business methods, and an increasing interest in secular activities. Feudalism was declining before the mixed forces of the new middle class, which sided with the national monarchs, and the invention of gunpowder, which made useless the battle-ax of the steel-coated knight. Scholasticism was unable to satisfy the growing interest in science, travel, and commerce. Medieval art had exhausted its originality, and its particular expression of religious themes no longer captured the taste of a generation which had turned away from the ideal of asceticism. Even the great Gothic architectural forms had degenerated into exaggerated and flamboyant shapes, and the Italian architects were already looking about for more suitable modes of expression. Religious subject matter in literature was losing its appeal. Themes of love and satires against chivalric ideals were proving more engaging to the sophisticated northern Italian cities.

**Why the Renaissance came first to Italy.** The reason the Renaissance came first to Italy is not difficult to appreciate. The growth of town life in the prosperous city-states of Tuscany and Lombardy stimulated a strong secular spirit and a concern with practical affairs. Prosperity came in great measure from the brisk trade which such cities as Venice and

Genoa enjoyed with the Near East. Florence had also built up substantial industries and an extensive banking system. There were many among the well-to-do who could and did spend their money for pictures, books, and fine goods of all kinds. Trade had brought about the importation of a variegated Greek culture from the Byzantine empire. Within the towns themselves there existed a strong civic pride which brooked little interference from either Pope or emperor. The despots who controlled the city-states were as a rule patrons of the new learning who tended to foster the arts. They helped rather than hindered the Renaissance in Italy.

**Humanism defined.** Of primary importance in the early Renaissance was the movement known as Humanism. In its narrower sense, Humanism was a reawakening of interest in the literature and philosophy of Greece and Rome. In its broader sense, it was a revival of interest in the affairs of this world and in the importance of the role of men here on earth. In the early Renaissance the spirit of Humanism centered mainly about the veneration of classical thought and literature, but the seeds of a broader ideology were already taking root. In the later Renaissance Humanism took on a more positive character. It manifested itself in new intellectual, social, political, and economic activity. In its broadest and best sense, then, Humanism represented a rebirth of interest in the activities of the everyday world and as such prompted men to make the discoveries and inventions which gave the Renaissance its dazzling quality.

**The classic revival.** The classical tradition had never died out during the Middle Ages.

Virgil, Cicero, and Caesar had always been popular; Aristotle had been venerated as though he were a Christian saint; and Roman law had been of inestimable help in the formation of canon doctrines. But the classical writers had been interpreted in the Middle Ages along purely religious lines and were cited as authorities to strengthen Christian dogmas. Early Humanism, on the other hand, was the enthusiastic appreciation of the classics

not for the sake of Christianity but for the sake of the pagan civilizations of Greece and Rome. In the past the true nature of the classical world had been obscured and misjudged. Churchmen made a practice of allegorizing pagan literature for the uses of Christian theology. Moreover, early Christian scholars were not able to study the manuscripts of antiquity accurately enough to assign to them their proper place in history. The result was that



the classical world always remained inexact and fanciful to scholars, while the Church tended to shun it because it was pagan and disturbing.

In fourteenth-century Italy, however, a new perspective was attained. The remains of Rome's imperial glory were to be found all over the peninsula, and Greek remains could be seen in southern Italy and Sicily. From the University of Bologna came an increasing desire to discover more about Roman legal practices. The struggle of Italian cities against feudal, papal, and Hohenstaufen control recalled the achievements of Rome as a free republic. By the end of the fifteenth century the Popes had recovered their temporal powers in central Italy and were engaging in secular activities to the detriment of their spiritual mission. These Renaissance Popes vied with the rulers of other Italian states to increase their prestige, and it became the fashion for them to act as patrons of scholars. Humanism spread through the land, bringing with it a veneration of ancient civilization and a desire to make over the arts, the literature, the language, and the modes of living according to classical models.

**Petrarch (1304-1374).** One of the earliest of the Humanists was Petrarch. As a youth he had resented his father's ambition to have him become a lawyer, and he turned to reading Virgil and Cicero for consolation. The story goes that his father once hurled the copies of the two classical writers into the flames, but the wail set up by the anguished boy caused the father to snatch the writings from the fire. From 1323 to 1326 Petrarch studied law at Bologna, but he dreamed always of the glories of the classical age. In 1327 he met the lady Laura, and inspired by his love of her, Petrarch wrote sonnets which made him one of the greatest lyric poets of all time. Because he had composed his poetry in Tuscan Italian, he was influential along with Dante in making the vernacular tongue the prevailing literary medium.

Petrarch's portrayal of Laura is exceedingly significant. Earlier poets had woven about their heroines an air of courtly love and religious idealization which made them quite unreal. Petrarch's Laura was a "flesh-and-blood" creature whom all readers could recognize as being as real and human as themselves.

In his *Secret* Petrarch has an imaginary con-

versation with St. Augustine, and here the conflict between new and startling ideas and those of medieval times is forcibly brought out. He comes to the conclusion that despite the possible importance of the world-to-come this world has many delights which should not be shunned.

Petrarch felt that he had to return to the study of antiquity, for the ancients also sang of the joys of this world. From youth he had collected the works of classical writers. He now began to compose in Latin and wrote an epic called *Africa*, in which he glorified the deeds of Scipio Africanus and by which he hoped to gain literary immortality. In this poem and his *Familiar Letters* (he was in the habit of addressing his thoughts to such men as Livy, Ovid, Virgil, and Seneca) he showed his passion for the departed glory of Rome, and he hoped through these works to reestablish classical thought in his own age. Ironically, however, Petrarch gained immortality as a writer not from his Latin *Africa* but from his Italian sonnets to Laura.

Petrarch was unable to carry out his ambition to learn Greek, and he was not a careful scholar. But his interests were very broad. He was a great traveler; he loved nature, good Latin, the poets of antiquity, and the beauties of the world in which he lived. He was an enemy of medieval traditionalism and of those who sought to stifle an age of new attitudes. For all these reasons, along with his many personal gifts, including a love of music and gardening, Petrarch's influence upon his contemporaries was enormous. He gave Humanism its first great impetus.

**Boccaccio (1313-1375).** Another important early Humanist was Giovanni Boccaccio. Sent early in life to work in Naples for the banking house of Bardi, Boccaccio witnessed there the actions of a gay and immoral court. In 1330 he saw a beautiful lady whom he immortalized in his writings as Fiammetta. Encouraged by her interest in him he wrote three romances: *Filocolo*, *Filostrato* (which deals with the tragic story of Troilus and Criseyde), and *Teseide* (an account of the rivalry of Palamon and Arcite over the lady Emilia). Chaucer got inspiration for his immortal *Troilus and Criseyde* and *The Knight's Tale* from Boccaccio's *Filostrato* and *Teseide*. In fact, it is possible that Chaucer may have met both Boccaccio and Petrarch in Italy.

Boccaccio's greatest work is the *Decameron*, a selection of one hundred bawdy and irreverent tales which are supposed to have been recounted by three young men and seven young women who had gone to a villa to escape the Black Death in 1348. Ten tales are recounted each day, tales based on the old *fabliaux* and chivalric accounts. Now, however, the spirit has changed. This time the tales are told by townsmen, and they satirize the follies of knights and other medieval characters. The contempt which so many of the townsmen had developed toward the old and outworn ideals of feudalism is clearly portrayed. The *Decameron* is highly indecent by present standards, but the stories are told with brilliant color.

When Boccaccio met Petrarch in 1350, Humanism was given a fresh impetus, for Boccaccio now received an insight into the values of antiquity. He attempted to learn Greek, wrote an encyclopedia of classical mythology, and went off to monasteries in search of manuscripts. By the time Petrarch and Boccaccio died, the study of classical literature and learning was in full swing in Italy.

**The search for manuscripts.** The search after ancient manuscripts became a Renaissance mania. Monastic libraries were known to be treasure houses, and agents of the Popes and other patrons carried out a diligent search. Before the middle of the fifteenth century, works by most of the important Latin authors were discovered.

About the time of Boccaccio's death the accumulation of Greek manuscripts and their study was enthusiastically undertaken. Italians journeyed to Constantinople and brought back rich materials. Greeks traveled west, and one of them in particular, Bessarion, became the leader of Greek studies in Rome, translating many Greek manuscripts into Latin for the use of those who did not know Greek. Another important Greek scholar, Chrysoloras, lectured in Florence. During the fifteenth century many eager Italian scholars journeyed to Constantinople to learn Greek and acquire precious manuscripts. By 1515 the most important Greek works in all fields were readily available.

The reading of Latin and Greek literature led to a more careful study of ancient ruins and other works of art. From such study the Humanists came to understand the classical

world in a truer historical perspective. For example, whereas the Middle Ages had thought of the soldiers of Alexander the Great as knights, the Renaissance historians no longer made this naïve mistake. On the other hand, so intent were the Humanists on getting back to antiquity that they resented the centuries between ancient Rome and themselves. This resentment resulted in their condemning or forgetting the best that the Middle Ages had produced.

**Shortcomings of Humanism.** The cult of classical letters had other serious defects. The scholars and intellectuals became so dominated by Roman and Greek forms that they tended to imitate rather than create for themselves. Their passion for Ciceronian Latin became pernicious; their writings were rich in form and barren in content. Furthermore, in their denial of medieval values the Humanists lost perspective toward their own social relationships. They were prone to engage in gambling, debauchery, gluttony, drinking, and other excesses.

Classical learning showed men that great civilizations had existed outside Christianity, and to that extent it broadened religious views. But, because the Greeks and Romans had said little about natural science, the Humanists scoffed at the scientific advances of their own day.

Lynn Thorndike maintains that Humanism "did very little to further the growth of natural or mathematical science," while it by no means put an end to Scholasticism. "The Humanists themselves continued to indulge in debates and disputations, only they argued whether Hannibal or Scipio was the greater man, instead of whether universals were real. . . . In short, Scholasticism continued almost unabated until Descartes or later, and the making of many commentaries on the *Sentences* of Peter Lombard and the *Metaphysics* of Aristotle was still going on merrily in the eighteenth century."<sup>1</sup>

**The growth of individuality.** A highly important characteristic of the Renaissance was its emphasis upon the freedom and dignity of man as an individual. The history of the Renaissance is in a sense the history of the revival of the individual expressing himself brilliantly and often tempestuously in art, literature, science, geographical discovery, and religion. Furthermore, in Italy man as an



individual began to free himself from the control of the medieval guild, the commune, and the authority of an age-old religious hierarchy.

The Greeks had been staunch supporters of individuality, even to the extent that Greek cities refused to sink their differences in the interest of the common good. The early Romans had also been individualistic, but the growth of the empire and compulsory stratification of society in later centuries broke down the ideal. The Middle Ages tended to

be antagonistic to individuality in most ways. Medieval Christianity preached self-abnegation and demanded obedience. To the degree that Abélard was an individualist, he was persecuted as a nonconformist.

The crusades had much to do with the revival of individuality by giving to people a passion for travel and a knowledge of other lands. The contact with Moslem culture, the new observation of nature, the hearkening back to classical ideals, the rise of vernacular languages at the expense of medieval Latin, the desire of artists to be untrammelled by medieval patterns, and the political jealousy and suspicion existing among the individual Italian cities—these and other factors were instrumental in fostering the ideal of individuality among men.

Of course the cult of individuality had its drawbacks, for some carried it to excess. The lawlessness and political confusion of the Italian Renaissance was due in no small measure to the prevailing view that every man was a law unto himself.

*The transition in art.* While the Humanists were often guilty of mere imitation, the artists of the Renaissance were richly original. But these artists, like those of any period, did not break completely with the art that preceded them. They took from the Greeks an interest in the individual and in the beauties of the human form. The Renaissance artists, while striving for greater secular expression, found in the Church their greatest patron. But the support of the Renaissance Church was given to individual artists, whereas the medieval Church employed countless craftsmen who remained nameless. Building churches, sculpturing saints and madonnas, and painting religious murals continued throughout the Renaissance. But artists also found other subjects in classical mythology and in the life around them.

*Transitional sculpture.* Sculpture had been developed with much skill in the Middle Ages, as we have noticed in a previous chapter. In the thirteenth century such sculptors as Nicolo Pisano produced works which revealed both classic and medieval influences. Pisano's work is an interesting mixture of the Gothic, the classic, and a certain realistic vigor. His famous pulpit at Siena illustrates the work of the new school, which adopted certain features of classic sculpture but made of it something



PISANO: PRESENTATION AND FLIGHT TO EGYPT



DUCCIO: THE BETRAYAL OF JUDAS (TEMPERA)

different. In the detail shown on the preceding page, the drapery, many of the faces, and the Roman decorative motifs at top and bottom show the classic influence. The realism of some of the faces shows the new Humanist influence, while the arrangement of the figures is typically medieval.

**Transitional painting.** The transition from the Gothic to the Renaissance can be seen in painting in the works of such men as Cimabue, Giotto, and Duccio. The mere fact that there are individuals known by name shows a change to individualism in contrast to medieval anonymity. Cimabue (1240?-1302), whose madonnas appear very medieval at first glance, had actually begun to search for fresh types of expression. He continued the medieval craft with his gold backgrounds and still painted altar panels in tempera as the medieval painters had done, but his madonnas vary slightly; they show the beginning of modeled forms when compared to the Byzantine flat patterns. The madonna shown here is patterned in the typical medieval manner. Note the stilted angle of the heads, the flat, round halos, the symmetry of pattern, and the Byzantine technique of scratching lines in the garments through the paint to the gold. But the figures of the child and some of the angels look round and real. The small figures at the bottom are a typical oriental device to make the central figure important.

The Sienese painter Duccio (1260?-1320?), shows again the mixture of medieval and Renaissance characteristic of the transitional painters. His compositions have much of the Byzantine about them. He took many of them from Byzantine icons and painted in the minute tempera technique of the medieval period. His use of such conventions as flat halos, scratched lines, brilliant color, and gold is distinctly Byzantine. But his painting shows interest in the narrative, as "The Betrayal of Judas" (opposite) discloses, and his figures are not merely symbols for saints but real human beings with individual characteristics. Notice the different ways in which the figures are reacting to the kiss of Judas—some fearful, some angry, and the Christ calm and sad. These are no longer mere symbols for people. Duccio's intense religious mysticism is, of course, very medieval. In Siena Duccio and others developed painting along conventional religious lines, while in Florence experimentation

brought forth the painting of the Renaissance.

Giotto (1266?-1337), a friend of Dante, gave the new school the greatest impetus. His work reveals a change in technique which was of great importance in developing Renaissance painting. At this time, owing mainly to the influence of the Franciscan order, there was great activity in building. The buildings had large wall spaces to be decorated, and mosaic was expensive and slow. Fresco was cheaper and faster. The technique of fresco painting requires a freedom of style not possible in tempera. Because fresco is painted directly into wet plaster, the painter has only a few hours in which to work on each plastered section. This naturally results in greater freedom of style. Giotto used fresco to decorate whole churches. He shows the Renaissance interest in the individual by painting human emotions and the gestures which express them. Note



CIMABUE: MADONNA AND CHILD (TEMPERA)

St. Francis expression of tenderness while preaching to the birds. Although there is a good deal of realism in his use of shading to create depth and roundness, the simplified manner in which Giotto treats such details as the tree in the painting below indicates that he is not yet completely of the Renaissance.

**Early Renaissance art.** The most characteristic developments of early Renaissance art took place in Florence, but changes were going on all over Italy as well, in such cities as Pisa, Venice, and Rome. In Florence the influences of classicism, Humanism, scientific experiment, and the patronage of the Medici rulers brought forth a large group of artists, too numerous to mention by name, who experimented in various techniques and types of expression. The interest in the classic awakened the artists to the use of the human body as a means of expression, while the increased knowledge of science directed them to study anatomy, light and shade, and perspective. That the classic influence was of great importance is not to be denied, but the art of this period was not a mere imitation of the

classic ideals, but an expression of the brilliant and dramatic era which produced Renaissance work.

**Renaissance patrons.** In the Italian cities continually growing trade and industry produced a moneyed class of traders, bankers, and manufacturers, many of whom displayed their wealth and bolstered their social importance by patronizing artists and scholars. Nearly all the art of the period was made possible by the patronage of wealthy businessmen, ruling families, and Popes. The leadership of Florence in the development of Renaissance art can be traced in great part to the patronage of the ruling house of Medici. The Medici were wealthy bankers and brilliant rulers, controlling the government of Florence throughout the fifteenth century and fostering the arts with enthusiasm. Cosimo, who controlled the destinies of the family from 1429 to 1464, for example, ably managed the affairs of Florence, gave commissions to Fra Angelico and Fra Filippo Lippi, collected manuscripts, and created the Platonic Academy, which stimulated the reading of Plato in opposition to the medieval reliance upon Aristotle.

Cosimo's grandson, Lorenzo de' Medici ("the Magnificent"), first citizen of Florence from 1469 until his death in 1492, not only carried on the family's proud traditions but gave it additional luster. He bestowed patronage and good advice upon painters, scholars, sculptors, and poets. Lorenzo himself was an able writer of verse. During his lifetime and under his patronage and guidance Florence reached its highest degree of artistic and intellectual perfection. Lorenzo not only gave commissions to Botticelli and Verrocchio, he also encouraged a young lad with a broken nose who was working with stone in his gardens at Florence. Lorenzo had not erred in his discernment of genius; the lad was Michelangelo.

Other princes, ruling despots of city-states, also patronized the arts—the Sforzas in Milan, the Gonzagas in Mantua, the Estes in Ferrara, the Montefeltros in Urbino, the court of Naples, and the Popes. The Popes were temporal as well as spiritual rulers, since they were political heads of the territory known as the Papal States. They were as eager as the other Italian princes to patronize the arts, and some of them were themselves scholars of ability. Their projects for the beautification of Rome included the Sistine chapel, commissions



GIOTTO: ST. FRANCIS PREACHING TO THE BIRDS  
(FRESCO)

to Michelangelo, da Vinci, Raphael, and Cellini, and the costly cathedral of St. Peter's.

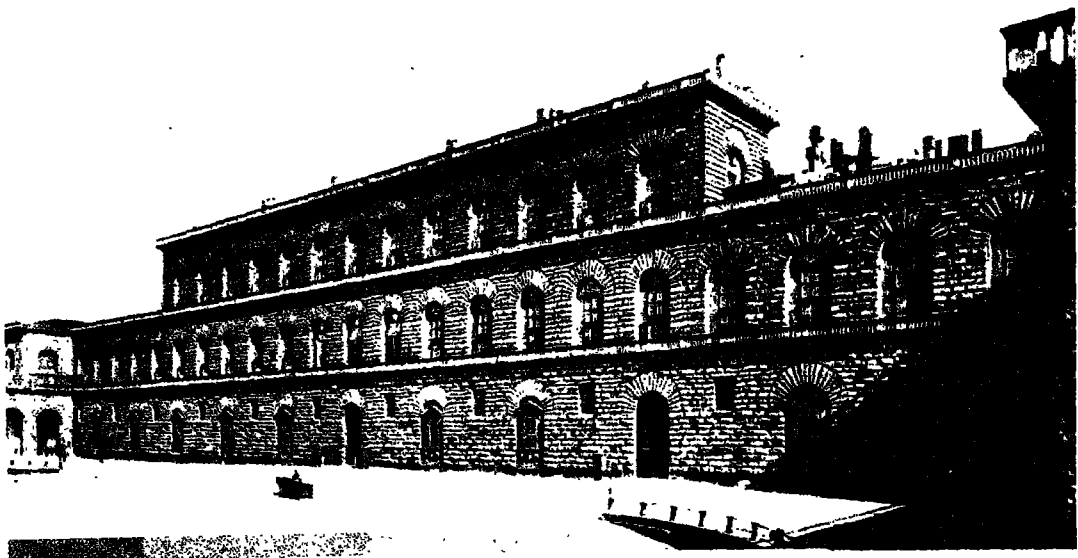
In the sixteenth century the Popes resembled the other secular rulers and even outdid them in the splendors of their court. Such a Pope as Alexander VI (1492-1503), in fact, gave the religious critics of the age something to cry against. He was the father of the unscrupulous Cesare and Lucrezia Borgia and devoted more time and thought to furthering the fortunes of his family than he did to religious matters. Wealthy families came to consider the office of Pope a desirable plum, and the Medici succeeded in achieving the office for two of their members, Leo X (1513-1521), son of Lorenzo, and Clement VII (1523-1534), nephew of Leo. Leo was a Humanist of brilliant endowments, and his pontificate was one of great activity in the arts and learning in Rome. But religious thinkers objected to his Humanism, and indeed the situation of the Renaissance Popes as patrons of Humanist scholars was an anomaly, for Humanism implied the negation of the authority of the Church.

**Renaissance artists.** The artists of the period were fine craftsmen and were also businessmen. Some of them ran studios with many assistants, and filled commissions as a shop would fill orders. The patrons allowed the artists a great deal of artistic freedom, but

nevertheless the patron must be flattered occasionally and his commissions followed carefully. The Renaissance artist worked almost exclusively on commission, with a definite place in mind for the finished work. This situation provides an interesting contrast with later periods, when artists painted when and as they wished and then attempted to sell the work to anyone who would buy it.

**Early Renaissance architecture.** In architecture the influence of the Church continued, but there was also a great deal of interest in Florence in secular buildings such as palaces. The Pitti palace (below), owned at one time by the Medici family, is an example of early palace architecture, with its impressive, heavy façade, a dwelling capable of being used as a fortress when intrigues and conspiracies became dangerous. A comparison of this Brunelleschi design with the later Farnese palace by Michelangelo (page 447) will show not only the change in general type but the later elaboration of detail, as life became more sumptuous.

Filippo Brunelleschi (1377-1446) marked the beginning of the new architecture. The fact that we know the names of individual architects is significant in showing the change from the group building of the Middle Ages to the individualistic work of the Renaissance. As a youth Brunelleschi visited Rome, where he studied the construction of ancient edifices.



THE FACADE OF PITTI PALACE IN FLORENCE



GHIBERTI: ADAM AND EVE (BRONZE RELIEF)

His buildings in Florence were not just copies of Roman models, although the Roman influence is everywhere. His most famous creation was the dome of the cathedral at Florence (visible at the far left of the picture on page 445). More characteristic were buildings with arcades of round Roman arches, Roman pediments above the windows, and Roman decorative motifs.

**Early Renaissance sculpture.** In Florence Lorenzo Ghiberti (1378-1455) was advancing further in the direction of a new type of sculpture. Ghiberti was trained to be a goldsmith,



DONATELLO: STATUE OF GATTAMELATA

which gave him proficiency in creating delicate figures. When he completed the bronze east doors of the baptistry in Florence, his workmanship was so superb that Michelangelo declared his doors worthy to be the gates of Paradise. His attempt to produce atmosphere and perspective in a bronze relief, however, was perhaps not the best use of a material which in itself is three-dimensional. In "Adam and Eve" (left), one of the panels of the baptistry doors, perspective is used in the distant figures of the angels to create, on an almost flat surface, an impression of atmosphere and space. Ghiberti's experiments were of great importance in their influence on the painters. In this period sculpture led painting in experiments with anatomy and light and shade.

Another sculptor living in Florence at this time was Donatello (1386?-1466), a man who was influenced by classical models to a great extent. His work shows an advanced knowledge of anatomy, which he used in a lifelike manner. His bronze equestrian statue of Gattamelata the *condottiere* (professional soldier) is realistic in detail. The casting of these huge bronze statues, twice life size, was an achievement in itself. The statue of Colleoni by Verrocchio, sketched on the map on page 435, is another example of the Renaissance equestrian statue. Verrocchio's horse has one foreleg unsupported, a difficult achievement with the casting facilities of the time. In that time the figures were first modeled in clay on wood frames, then cast in a mold made from the clay.

**Early Renaissance painting.** In Florence there were two trends in painting. On one hand were the scientific painters, who were constantly searching for new techniques and means of expression, and on the other were those painters who made use of their contemporaries' discoveries for self-expression without contributing technical knowledge of their own. An example of the first trend was the brilliant young Masaccio, whose work gave impetus to painting. Although he painted traditional subjects, he introduced a note of realism which influenced later painters as Donatello influenced sculptors. Compare the "Expulsion of Adam and Eve" (page 443) with the Cimabue madonna (page 439) to see the new treatment. The figures of Adam and Eve show Masaccio's more realistic portrayal of anatomy

and his use of perspective and modeling of figures in light and shade.

Domenico Veneziano (d. 1461) introduced the technique of oil glazing, an innovation of great importance. In his profile portraits Veneziano used tempera "underpainting" for his hard, precise drawing, and then laid over it thin "glazes" of oil paint. In this way he could get a softness of shading not possible in the more linear tempera technique. Oil glazing came to be very popular with later artists, because it could produce depth and atmosphere more realistically. Compare Duccio's tempera painting "The Betrayal of Judas" (page 438) with the much later oil-glazed painting "Virgin of the Rocks" (page 449). Oil glazing had already developed in Flanders, and through Venetian contacts there Veneziano brought the technique to Venice and from there to Florence.

An example of the less scientific painter is Fra Angelico (1387-1455), a contemporary of Masaccio really only in time, for the two artists represent completely different ages. Fra Angelico painted religious scenes of surpassing beauty and reverence, but although he was himself influenced by Masaccio to the point

of incorporating the latter's realism into his backgrounds and settings, the spirit of his work remained essentially medieval.

Benozzo Gozzoli (1420-1497) and Sandro Botticelli (1444-1510) were other painters who did not experiment in science as applied to art but showed the influence of the experimenters



GOZZOLI: JOURNEY OF THE MAGI



MASACCIO: EXPULSION OF ADAM AND EVE



BOTTICELLI: THREE GRACES (DETAIL OF "SPRING")

of the day. Gozzoli pleased the townsmen of Florence by painting interesting secular studies of city life. His decorations in the Medici chapel of the Riccardi palace show the procession which took place when the patriarch of Constantinople visited Florence. The procession is entitled "Journey of the Magi," but in reality it is full of portraits of important people of the day. As such it is interesting reportorial work. The detail shown on page 443 is a portrait of Lorenzo de' Medici, represented as one of the three kings.

Botticelli used a nervous and sensitive line. Observe the fluttering line in the garments in the detail of the Three Graces from "Spring," opposite. The movement and patterning of hair and garments in his paintings are particularly distinctive. He painted in an imaginative and unrealistic manner and linked both pagan and Christian subject matter. After painting many such classically inspired pictures, Botticelli was influenced by the Dominican preacher Savonarola and thereafter became intensely religious in his subject matter, even to the extent of destroying some of his earlier works.

### *The High Renaissance (1500-1530)*

**P**olitical change in Italy. In April, 1492, Lorenzo the Magnificent, ruler of Florence, was dying in his villa outside the city. Suddenly he sent for the Dominican preacher Savonarola, whose words and zeal in preaching had been taking all Florence by storm and who had prophesied that the Church was to be scourged and regenerated. He came to the dying Lorenzo, told him that he must have faith in the mercy of God, restore all ill-gotten gains to the city, and give back to Florence its freedom from Medicean rule. Lorenzo agreed to the first two stipulations, but he regarded the ascetic Savonarola in stern silence upon hearing his third request. No true son of the Medici could think of giving up control of Florence. Lorenzo turned his face to the wall, while Savonarola waited in vain for an answer. Lorenzo died without giving back to Florence her lost liberty.

Lorenzo died in an era of great change. A new day was at hand for Italy, though not exactly the kind which Savonarola had anticipated. Three years after Lorenzo's death Charles VIII of France came down to conquer

Italy. We are not here concerned with tracing the details of political events. It will suffice to say that from 1495 to 1559 the Italian states were the pawns of foreign powers. French and Spanish armies fought on Italian soil. Battles were fought over boundaries. All Europe became involved in the struggle for supremacy between rival Hapsburg and French kings. Strangely enough, it was in the midst of this political turmoil that the Italian Renaissance reached its zenith. In fact, the very turbulence of conditions was in a sense an expression of Renaissance individuality.

**Savonarola (1452-1498).** When Charles VIII of France was invited by the Duke of Milan to seize the kingdom of Naples, there was one man who welcomed the invasion of the foreigner—Savonarola, the Florentine preacher and reformer, who had long been prophesying the coming of such a man as the scourge of God. Savonarola's influence upon his own times was enormous. When the discredited Medici fled before Charles, the Dominican zealot organized the city as a republic and managed to keep the French from sacking



*The martyrdom of Savonarola in the public square of Florence is pictured in this contemporary painting.*

Florence on their way to Naples. Meanwhile he attacked the iniquities of the Borgia Pope, Alexander VI, and he was such a master of oratory that he persuaded the wealthy and pleasure-loving Florentines, for a while, to make bonfires of their luxuries and jewels. Savonarola was later hailed by Luther and the Protestants as a forerunner of their movement. Actually he was trying to bring the papacy back to its tradition of simple living and high thinking and thus avert the Protestant Revolt.

But Savonarola did not possess the power to enforce his dictates. On May 23, 1498, publicly humiliated in the great square of Florence by having his Dominican garb torn from him, Savonarola with two companions was hanged and burned, a victim of political intrigue.

**Machiavelli's political theories.** The rise of powerful states during the Renaissance, discussed in Chapter 15, was accompanied by new political theories. The man who gave most eloquent voice to the new concepts of statecraft was Niccolò Machiavelli (1469-1527). An able historian who wrote an eight-volume *History of Florence*, Machiavelli also had experience in state diplomacy, performing duties at times for Cesare Borgia. Machiavelli wanted to see that the foreign armies who periodically invaded Italy were expelled from the land,

and he thought it necessary that the disunited cities of Italy be united under one ruler. He argued that a patriotic tyrant, making use of all weapons at his command, could achieve that end. *The Prince* sets forth the techniques which the tyrant is to use. The techniques are a brilliant exposition of the low state of morality during the Renaissance. Machiavelli wrote a longer and better-balanced work on the same subject, called *Discourses*. However, the world knows him for *The Prince*.

In *The Prince* Machiavelli argued that the end justifies the means and that whatever makes for success is right. Thus he separated political science entirely from ethics. Some of the statements in his famous justification of success and expediency are quite breath-taking to the political moralist. In counseling the prince upon his acquisition of a new principality, Machiavelli says that "injuries ought to be done all at one time, so that, being tasted less, they offend less; benefits ought to be given little by little, so that the flavor of them may last longer." Again, "Hence it is necessary for a prince wishing to hold his own to know how to do wrong, and to make use of it or not according to necessity."

Machiavelli suggested also that his prince, after summing up all elements, should then act aggressively in order to win fortune. "For my



part I consider that it is better to be adventurous than cautious, because fortune is a woman, and if you wish to keep her under, it is necessary to beat and ill-use her; and it is seen that she allows herself to be mastered by the adventurous rather than by those who go to work more coldly."<sup>2</sup>

Machiavelli has been soundly criticized for his lack of morality, yet at the same time he has been studiously read by generations of statesmen. We must remember that he was a product of his age and with extraordinary objectivity simply wrote down what appeared to him the most valid means of ensuring success in the administration of a state. It is interesting that Victor Emmanuel, who succeeded in uniting Italy, slept with Machiavelli's *Prince* beneath his pillow and derived much inspiration from the last chapter of the book, "An Exhortation to Liberate Italy from the Barbarians." It has been pointed out that in Machiavelli's masterpiece we see the beginning of a theory of social dynamics, namely, that a state must either expand and develop or decay. He is the great apologist for the philosophy of political expediency and power politics. It is not difficult to understand why Napoleon read Machiavelli so avidly or why modern dictators have found so much to their liking in *The Prince*. *The Prince* is far removed in point of time but not in ideology from *Mein Kampf* by Adolf Hitler.

**High Renaissance art.** In the Italy of a martyred Savonarola, an invading French army, a secularized papacy, and a calculating Machiavelli, Renaissance art achieved a high state of brilliance. We may wonder how art could flower in so much political turmoil. For one thing, Renaissance warfare was conducted by professional armies and involved comparatively few people, so that most people could continue with their daily tasks without much interference. Another reason lay in the spirit abroad. The age pulsed with activity and new ideas, and the artists of the period were probably influenced by the new ideas and enthusiasms of others. Still another reason, one which we have mentioned earlier, was the existence of so many genuine patrons of the arts. These wealthy men were constantly carrying on war with one another, but they appreciated the value of the artist in society, and took special pains to see not only that he would not be harmed but on the contrary

that he be allowed to grace their courts and receive particular favor.

A great deal of the artistic activity of the High Renaissance was carried on in Rome. Rome had patrons who could give more money and opportunities to artists. The Popes of the period had become the most art conscious and lavish of all patrons, as the pontificates of Leo x, Clement vii, and others attest. The greatest artists of the period worked in the Vatican at one time or another. It was full of secular luxuries. It did not seem inconsistent to Popes and artists to include representations of mythological figures in the decorations of the sacred palace.

**Architecture in the High Renaissance.** Some of the period developments in architecture can be seen in the cathedral of St. Peter's in Rome (illustrated on the next page). This building was the work of many famous Renaissance architects. It shows the lavish decoration so popular in these times. By this time no more building was done in the Gothic style and in its place arose a style which took inspiration from the buildings of classical times. The vogue of borrowing styles of architecture from former periods was begun in the Renaissance. Not until recently have architects become interested in developing new structural methods instead of borrowing styles from other periods. Renaissance architects made no structural innovations; in fact, they often had to use iron rods to support their beautiful but badly built arches. Their contribution was in decoration and in decorative features, such as the balustrade, arcade, and cornice. The balustrade usually served the purpose of a guard rail. The one on the top of the façade of St. Peter's is almost as high as a man, and although this makes it more noticeable as a decoration, it is useless as a guard rail. The cornice was used in the interior of St. Peter's between the columns and the vault of the roof, as can be seen in the illustration. It served no purpose but that of decoration. The interior of St. Peter's shows a lack of scale. The structure itself, the decoration, and even the figure sculpture is so large that it is impossible in such a picture as this to see how huge it is. A man is not much taller than the bases of the columns in the nave.

The architect Bramante (1444?-1514) was most influential in fixing the stamp of old Rome indelibly on the products of the new

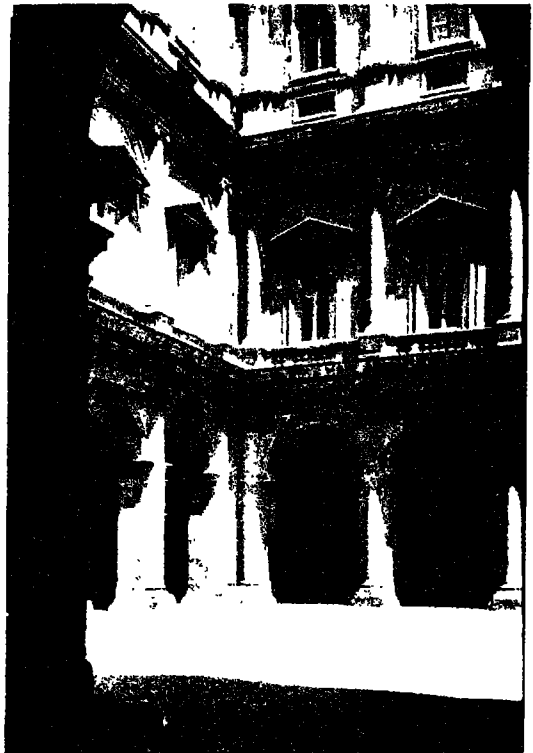


INTERIOR VIEW OF ST. PETER'S CATHEDRAL IN ROME, FROM THE MAIN DOOR

"Roman school." He is especially remembered for his plans for the construction of St. Peter's, in which he visualized an edifice built in the form of a Greek cross. Bramante died before the church was finished, and it was left to the artist Michelangelo to complete the work with an impressive dome (illustrated on the map, page 435).

Renaissance architects also made advances in the construction of palaces and other secular buildings. Examples of these are to be found in Rome, Venice, and the smaller cities. The Palazzo Farnese in Rome was the work of the architects Sangallo and Michelangelo. It illustrates the new use of classical details applied to Renaissance compositions. The pediments over the windows, the engaged columns, and the decorative details all show classical inspiration made into something new. The palaces of this period did not have to be fortresses, too, and, compared with the earlier palaces, they are more decorative and refined. From the height of the Renaissance onward, all Europe began to take to the new architecture, which appealed to the bourgeoisie, the lovers of secularism and luxury, and the devotees of antiquity.

**Sculpture.** Sculpture in the High Renaissance reached its peak in the work of Michel-



COURTYARD OF FARNESE PALACE IN ROME



MICHELANGELO: TOMB OF LORENZO DE' MEDICI

angelo Buonarroti (1475-1564). The glorification of the nude, particularly the male body, was a characteristic of Michelangelo's art. The Middle Ages had looked upon nudity as indecent and alien to the philosophy of despising everything human as sinful and evil. Michelangelo was a fitting follower of Phidias the Greek in his portrayal of the male body. But there is none of the classic left in Michelangelo's use of the human form. He has ideal-



BENVENUTO CELLINI: SALT CELLAR OF FRANCIS I

ized the body and given it a strength and force which lift it to superhumanness. Even the thoughtful figure of Lorenzo (left) and the reposing figures below him are full of strength. In his great compositions such as the Medici tombs can be seen Michelangelo's free, sweeping composition, which contained the seeds of the later baroque style.

Perhaps the finest of the sculptors after Michelangelo was Benvenuto Cellini (1500-1572). However, Cellini was a greater craftsman than artist. As a goldsmith he was extremely skillful, and the objects which he created show an extraordinary ability with detail. The salt cellar of Francis I is a *tour de force* in luxurious gold craftsmanship, but it exhibits a Renaissance interest in ornamentation rather than utility.

**High Renaissance painting.** Painters of the period extended the technical experiments of the fifteenth-century artists and used the new techniques in creating art which was a true expression of the age which produced it. In their work there is no trace of the medieval, and they went far beyond the earlier classic influences. The great technical facility which permitted them to embody their ideas in works of art was made possible by earlier experiments in light and shade, perspective, and representation of anatomy. But although these men were great technicians, they did not allow workmanship to outweigh content in their work but maintained a balance between the two.

**Leonardo da Vinci (1452-1519).** The little information we have concerning the life of Leonardo the Florentine comes in large measure from the colorful but often inaccurate account by Vasari, a contemporary artist. According to Vasari:

"The radiance of his countenance, which was splendidly beautiful, brought cheerfulness to the heart of the most melancholy . . . he possessed so great a degree of physical strength, that he was capable of restraining the most impetuous violence, and was able to bend one of the iron rings used for the knocker of doors, or a horseshoe, as if it were lead . . . he extended shelter and hospitality to every friend, rich or poor . . . and as the city of Florence received a great gift in the birth of Leonardo, so did it suffer a more than grievous loss at his death."<sup>3</sup>

We know that Leonardo was an extraor-

dinarily versatile man, proficient in as wide a variety of subjects as Aristotle: mathematics, architecture, geology, botany, physiology, anatomy, sculpture, painting, music, and poetry. He was always experimenting. The result was that he finished very little that he began. To quote Vasari again: "Leonardo, with his profound intelligence of art, commenced various undertakings, many of which he never completed, because it appeared to him that the hand could never give its due perfection to the object or purpose which he had in his thoughts, or beheld in his imagination."<sup>4</sup>

In painting, Leonardo was a superb draughtsman and a master of soft modeling in full light and shade. He went about his placement of figures scientifically and created groups perfectly balanced in the given space. He was particularly fond of a pyramidal composition such as that in the "Virgin of the Rocks." Yet his is not a mere mechanical formula repeated again and again.

One of Leonardo's most famous paintings is the "Mona Lisa." Another is "The Last Supper," a deep psychological study of the moment when Christ tells His twelve disciples that one will betray Him. Unfortunately it has been practically obliterated by climate. Leonardo was experimenting with the use of an oil medium combined with plaster when he painted this picture on the walls of the refectory of Santa Maria della Grazie in Milan. It was an unsuccessful experiment, and the painting is rapidly disappearing.



LEONARDO DA VINCI: VIRGIN OF THE ROCKS



MICHELANGELO: THE CREATION OF ADAM (FRESCO)



RAPHAEL: THE SCHOOL OF ATHENS (FRESCO)

Leonardo da Vinci was really the last of the great Florentine painters, the one who developed the science of the earlier painters to its highest point. In the "Virgin of the Rocks" (page 449) can be seen the realistic perspective and light and shade which he developed. Meantime painters in Rome were executing the commissions of Popes, and the center of artistic activity moved to Rome.

**Raphael.** Raphael Sanzio (1483-1520) was wealthy, courted, praised, and imitated throughout his brief but brilliant career. Not only was he the special favorite of Leo X, but he was idealized for the next three and a half centuries as having all the qualities of a great artist. Although a brilliant painter, Raphael was guilty of a certain superficiality and sentimentalism. He was himself aware of these faults when he saw some of Michelangelo's work, for he attempted, rather unsuccessfully, to incorporate into his own eclectic style his rival's achievement of dynamic strength and virility. Raphael was not very successful in his attempt, but his fluent style is pleasing in its own way. The mural "The School of Athens"

shows Raphael as an able composer, while his portraits show an insight into character. A comparison of the way in which Raphael decorated a wall (above) with the treatment of the same problem by an Egyptian (page 47), and Giotto (page 440) will reveal striking differences. Raphael used perspective, creating the illusion of depth in the wall.

**Michelangelo as a painter.** Excelling as sculptor, painter, engineer, and architect, Michelangelo was also a painter of the highest caliber. Michelangelo looked upon sculpture as his first love. When he turned to painting the Sistine Chapel at the command of Julius II, he grumbled at the enormous task and said he was a sculptor, not a painter. The gigantic task of painting the ten thousand square feet of ceiling took him four years and included one hundred forty-five pictures. Most of this work he did absolutely alone on high scaffolds, lying on his back. In painting as in sculpture he made use of the male nude figure, and his knowledge of anatomy and the movement of the human body is remarkable. To conceive of these figures as one unified com-

position required a vast store of knowledge and an almost incredible skill. The figures in the Sistine Chapel are pagan in the extreme, with Christ "like a Hercules." "The Creation of Adam" (page 449) is a detail from the Sistine Chapel paintings. Notice the way in which the long, relaxed line of Adam's body contrasts with the tense, active lines of the group supporting the Creator.

One of those versatile geniuses who were the idols of Renaissance society, Michelangelo in addition to being an artist and engineer was also a creditable poet and politician. Writing as an old man, he shows a thin-edged humor in his description of himself: "I live alone, confined like the pith in a tree. My teeth rattle like the keys of a musical instrument; my face is a scarecrow; in one ear a spider spins its web; in the other a cricket chirps all night; my catarrh rattles in my throat and will not let me sleep. This is the end to which art, which proves my glory, has brought me."<sup>5</sup>

**The decline of Roman and Florentine painting.** It was next to impossible to expect that Renaissance painting could have continued to maintain the standard of quality which had been set by such artists as da Vinci, Michelangelo, and Raphael. Painting was bound to decline in the hands of successors who had the technical facility but lacked the imagination of the masters, and who tried to hide their deficiencies by exaggeration and sentimentalism. Where, for example, the madonnas of da Vinci and Raphael had been marked by restraint of feeling and poise of feature, the madonnas of lesser artists were depicted with tears rolling down their cheeks or gazing at the onlooker with simpering smiles.

**The Venetian school.** In Venice, however, painting continued on a high level. The Renaissance came later there than elsewhere. It was an appropriate setting for the development of a lavish art. The beautiful colors and clear atmosphere of Venice led painters to be interested in rich color and the effect of air and space, rather than in the more solid form of the other Italian schools. Its wealthy middle-class merchant princes were willing to play the role of patron. A Venetian school of artists now arose under the most favorable circumstances, given great impetus by the painting of Giovanni Bellini (1430-1516), who was the first to depart from the rather sculptural art of other parts of Italy.



GIORGIONE: PASTORAL CONCERT

Venetian art was the final expression of the secularization of painting. While the artists sometimes painted exquisite madonnas, they were imbued with the Venetian spirit of wealth, civic pride, and love of splendor and color. Wealthy merchants and proud doges commissioned pictures of themselves rigged out in rich brocades and gold chains and grouped with beautiful young women who scarcely looked like madonnas. There is sensuality in Venetian painting evident in the artists' love of decoration, rich costumes, and striking nude figures.

The Venetian painters excelled in *chiaroscuro* (the technique of employing full light and shade). Compare such paintings as "Pope Paul" and the Florentine "Virgin of the Rocks" with Duccio's "Betrayal of Judas" and Giotto's "St. Francis" to see this development. They used the technique of tempera and oil glaze in a characteristic manner, applying a thick tempera underpainting which produced a rich color and light with oil glazing.

Giorgione (1478-1511) was strongly affected by Humanism. His indebtedness to antiquity is shown in his subject matter by his use of classical themes and idyllic landscapes. In this respect Giorgione was like Botticelli, who also delighted in pagan subject matter. But unlike Botticelli, who made his mythological figures imaginative and unrealistic, Giorgione's muses and Venuses were quite obviously lovely Venetian models. The figures in the "Pastoral Concert" (above) show this complete worldliness.

Titian (1477?-1576) made particularly brilliant use of the oil-glaze technique. In his active life of ninety-nine years (it took a plague

to carry him off) he painted prolifically. Deft in his handling of figures and color, he painted in a completely secular fashion, and even his religious pictures are concerned with sensuous beauties of color and atmosphere. His portraits show the same love of color and texture of rich fabrics, but these are always subordinated to the portrayal of the sitter's character. This love of rich fabrics and delight in textures can be seen in Titian's portrait of Pope Paul III (below), but the clothes and background are treated as large masses which do not detract from the face.

Paolo Veronese (1528-1588) and Tintoretto (1518-1592) are two other important Venetian painters. Tintoretto used strong light and shade in a very dramatic manner. Later we shall find his influence in the work of El Greco in Spain.

**Music in the Renaissance.** Music made great advances at this time. Polyphonic music came into existence, with its combination of various voice parts. Such new instruments as the violin, spinet, and harpsichord were developed. The greatest of the masters of polyphonic music was Giovanni da Palestrina (1525-1594), who gave expression to his own deep piety with religious music that is today

as much admired by music lovers as it ever was. In 1594 the first opera was produced. But the greatest composers were yet unborn.

**The rise of secular drama.** The Renaissance also witnessed the rise of secular drama. During classical times the drama was free both in expression and subject matter. The decline of the Roman empire was accompanied by decline in the drama and the use of theaters. However, as we saw earlier, the drama arose again during the later Middle Ages, although it began as an agent of the Church and was at first used simply for purposes of visual education. Thus grew up the miracle and morality plays, which drew the townsmen eagerly to the church porch or an adjacent stage to witness the enactment of scenes which they all knew and loved. Certain rather naive secular elements were introduced into these plays, but a complete divorce of the Church and stage did not occur until the Renaissance.

The new plays were written in the vernacular, and their themes were often taken from classical sources. In time there developed a type of comedy, called the *commedia del arte*, which reflected the everyday life of the Renaissance. As secular dramas grew in popularity, theaters were once again built to afford a permanent setting for their presentation. The stage had walls on the side and back, with five entrances.

**Poetry and prose.** Epic poetry was extremely popular. The best known epic was Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso*, written in 1515. Poetry with pastoral motifs also won attention at this time. Novels and lampoons attracted interest. The most notorious of the lampoonists was Pietro Aretino (1492-1556), whose blackmail of famous contemporaries won him both a large fortune and a notorious reputation and gave to him the title Scourge of Princes.

**Manners.** Manners became more refined in the Renaissance. Giovanni della Casa (d. 1556) wrote a *Galateo of Manners and Behaviours*, which summed up what the socially correct lady and gentleman should (and should not) do:

"It is also an unmannerly part for a man to lay his nose upon the cup where another must drink; or upon the meat that another must eat, to the end to smell unto it; but rather I would wish he should not smell at all, no, not to that which he himself should eat and drink because it might chance there might



TITIAN: PORTRAIT OF POPE PAUL III

fall some drop from his nose. . . . Neither, by my advice, shalt thou reach to any man that cup of wine whereof thy self hast drunk and tasted, without he be more than a familiar friend unto thee. And much less must thou give any part of the pear or the fruit which thou has bitten in thy mouth before."<sup>6</sup>

The most famous book dealing with Renaissance manners, written by Baldassarre Castiglione (1478-1529), is called *The Courtier*. According to Castiglione the best courtier is likely to be of noble birth, but his true worth is created "by character and intellect rather than by birth."<sup>7</sup> Not only must he be brave at all times, but he must also be schooled in literature and the Humanist virtues. This was a departure from the old chivalric code of feudal times.

In his *Autobiography* Cellini has given us a remarkable insight into the manners and morals of that vivid period of history and at the same time demonstrated that he possessed that prime characteristic of the Renaissance—*virtu*. *Virtu* is not to be confused with virtue. The two words had no connection with each other; in fact, a man possessing *virtu*

often appeared to be conspicuously deficient in virtue, as did Cellini himself. *Virtu* meant the gifts of natural ability and tremendous vitality, culminating in genuine achievement. To possess *virtu* and to be a universal man (*uomo universale*)—these constituted the Renaissance ideal of a great man. While Cellini approximated the ideal closely, it was achieved completely by such geniuses as da Vinci and Michelangelo. If in our eyes Cellini appears immoral, it was because his age was immoral. If he astounds us with his violence and turbulence, it was because the High Renaissance was violent and turbulent. If he amazes us with his vitality and rich imagination, it was partly because his age was strong and unruly and lavish in its creativeness.

*Women in Renaissance society.* Renaissance women enjoyed a much higher social position than they had known in the Middle Ages. Some of them were extremely intellectual and well educated. To women who took an active part in public affairs (and possessed much *virtu*) the name *virago* was given. Catherine Sforza, who carried on warfare as ably as any man, is a celebrated example of the *virago*.

### *The Renaissance throughout Europe*

**S***pread of the Renaissance.* The Renaissance developed first in Italy, for reasons we have already examined. Presently the stimulating ideas current in Italy began to spread beyond the Alps and combine with indigenous developments to produce a French Renaissance, an English Renaissance, and so on. In each country thought and art, while influenced profoundly by Italy, developed in distinctive ways. The Renaissance outside Italy was not merely a copying or adaptation of Italian modes and forms; it was a movement which arose in each country in part out of the same conditions that produced it in Italy.

Remaining feudal and monastic much longer than Italy, the northern countries gradually came to life while Italy was at the zenith of her wealth and influence. The great discoveries which began at the end of the fifteenth century brought great changes in European life. The Italian trade monopoly was broken by the discovery of new routes to the east. The increase of trade which developed in northern Europe, especially with the influx of precious metals from the New World, brought

more and more people to the towns and made wealthy burghers of many tradesmen, bankers, and craftsmen. The towns had their own life—their own laws and customs and atmosphere. Urban life was sophisticated as compared with life on the manor, and townsmen were eager for entertainment, interesting ideas, and means of showing their wealth and enhancing their social prestige. At the same time, the new towns of northern Europe entered into greater commercial activities with Italian cities, and thus Italian ideas traversed the routes of trade northward over the Alps.

As in Italy, wealthy burghers played patron to artists and scholars, both native and Italian. The rulers of the rising nations also added brilliance to their courts by importing artists from Italy or sponsoring their own countrymen.

*The development of printing.* Printing was an important element in the diffusion of the Italian Renaissance and in the exchange of ideas between men of all countries. Two elements were essential to this invention, paper and movable type. The Greeks and Romans





*A Flemish artist paints the building of a highway between two walled towns in the fifteenth century. Ax and rope men are chopping and pulling down trees to clear the path for the pavers, who sit on stools. The road surface is to be of heavy block stone. Note the construction of the arched bridge.*

had written on papyrus. The Middle Ages made use of parchment, the dressed skins of such animals as sheep. Both papyrus and parchment were unwieldy, costly, and not easily adaptable to printing. As early as the second century the Chinese had been making paper from silk (see map, page 22). In the eighth century the Moslems had created a cotton paper, which, upon being introduced into Spain, resulted in the thirteenth century in the substitution there of a linen texture. The new linen paper (*paper* is from papyrus) spread throughout Europe and proved to be a proper medium for taking the impression of movable type.

We saw earlier that the Chinese first invented type that was non-movable, consisting of a whole group of characters cut together. They were also the first to invent movable type, a method used in Europe as early as 1448. Associated with the earliest European development of printing is the name of John

Gutenberg, who used movable type in his printing shop at Mainz to produce papal documents and the first printed version of the Bible in 1454.

The new invention was a tremendously important medium for culture diffusion. It is difficult to overestimate the effects of printing in the quickening of Europe's intellectual life. At once knowledge could reach a thousand times more people, and there was a genuine incentive to learn to read. By 1500 all the chief countries of Europe possessed the means for printing books. It is said that prices of books soon sank to one eighth of their former cost, thus placing books within the reach of a multitude of people who formerly were unable to buy them. Learning was no longer the private domain of the Church or of those few people wealthy enough to own hand-copied volumes. At first the Church tried to use printing to further its own ends and also to control what was printed. But such a censorship was

futile, and knowledge became the heritage of anyone who could learn to read instead of an advantage enjoyed by merely a small group of intellectuals. It was now possible and profitable to cater to the tastes of the common people, and pamphlets and controversial tracts soon became common.

**Humanism comes to France.** In addition to the invention of printing, the invasion of Italy by Charles VIII in 1494 was instrumental in bringing many of the Humanistic ideas of the south to France. French scholars had visited Italy prior to the invasion, but the Sorbonne in Paris had so far remained the stronghold of church orthodoxy. The greatest of the early French Humanists was Guillaume Budé (1467-1540). He studied law at Orléans, translated Plutarch, and, sent as royal ambassador to Italy, investigated Roman law and coinage as a means of gaining a greater insight into the daily life of the ancients. Budé was the principal agent in the establishment of the Collège de France and of a great library which later became the Bibliothèque Nationale. Two other scholars, named Estienne, father and son, were publishers by trade.

Francis I (1515-1547) desired to make his court a center of enlightenment. He was not able to do so until after he had fought two costly wars with the great Charles V of Spain from 1522 to 1529 (see p. 480). But after the signing of the Treaty of Cambrai (1529) Francis cultivated Renaissance studies at his court. He sponsored Budé in the establishment of the Collège and the French library. Francis had a sister even more brilliant than himself, Margaret of Navarre (1492-1549). This intelligent and attractive queen was versed in current religious thought, classical philosophy, and Italian literature. Margaret wrote poetry herself, as well as a series of stories known as the *Heptameron*. This work, written in imitation of Boccaccio's *Decameron*, contains both spiritual and lascivious themes and includes some of the most advanced thought of the time. The talented queen is to be remembered even more, however, for the influence which she exerted on the people of her own era.

**Rabelais (1495?-1553).** Among the friends of Margaret of Navarre was the fascinating French Humanist François Rabelais. He was a monk who lived as no true follower of the Benedictine rule should live. But his brilliant, if scurrilous, attack upon all hypocrisy and his

vivid descriptions of his own age make delightful and informative reading.

Rabelais learned medical science, read with insatiable appetite in the classics, yet used his native French in a manner which the most humble person could enjoy. In 1532 he finished that extraordinary work later known as *The Inestimable Life of the Great Gargantua, Father of Pantagruel*. The work relates the adventures of Gargantua, a giant of French folklore, of tremendous stature and appetite, to whom the French peasants ascribed the most marvelous feats, and his son Pantagruel. In the course of the narrative Rabelais gives his views on educational reform and the monastic system and makes pungent attacks upon the abuses of the papacy, the schoolmen, the monks, and the magistrates.

Rabelais himself drank in all knowledge, and hence to him there was nothing repugnant about anything which was part of life and man's natural activities. Human nature was to Rabelais a manifestation of God's purpose and therefore good, and the less trammelled and thwarted it was, the better. What Rabelais could not stomach was hypocrisy and repression. For those who were guilty of these tendencies, he reserved his choicest invective and obscenities. He attacked the monks with peculiar pleasure—he called them a "rabble of squint-minded fellows, dissembling and counterfeit saints, demure lookers, hypocrites, pretended zealots, tough friars, buskin-monks, and other such sects of men, who disguise themselves like masquers to deceive the world. . . . Fly from these men, abhor and hate them as much as I do, and upon my faith you will find yourself the better for it. And if you desire to be good Pantagruelists, that is to say, *to live in peace, joy, health, making yourselves always merry*, never trust those men that always peep out through a little hole."<sup>8</sup>

Such a quotation illustrates Rabelais' impetuous style of writing, and it sums up his Humanistic philosophy.

**Montaigne.** When Rabelais died in 1553, Michel de Montaigne was twenty years old. Until his death in 1592 this polished, urbane essayist was France's leading Humanist. His *Essays* condemned the pedantry of the day (into which Humanism had largely degenerated) and showed the need of educating children so that they might understand what they are learning. "To know by rote is no knowledge

and signifies no more but only to retain what one had intrusted to our memories." Montaigne was a forerunner of our modern psychology of education, originator of the modern essay, and a thinker who saw that the problems of human life are more important to solve than the syntax of an obscure sentence from Horace.

**The northern Humanists.** The discoveries and literature of the Italian Humanists were also disseminated throughout northern Europe by means of the new printed books. Another reason for the spread of Italian thought was the close political connection between the German and Italian states. Because of this fact, as early as Petrarch's times the Humanism of the south crossed the Alps. Because the northern universities were still hidebound by tradition and conservatism, many German students journeyed to Italian schools and returned with the new concepts which were transforming Italian thought. Humanism began to flourish with especial vigor in many

of the wealthier trading centers such as Augsburg.

**Erasmus (1466?-1536).** Among the northern Humanists, the most influential and cosmopolitan in thought was Erasmus, a contemporary of Rabelais. Born in Rotterdam, he passed most of his long life elsewhere—in Germany, France, England, Italy, and Switzerland. At Basel in Switzerland the scholar *par excellence* lived out his last years in comfortable safety, content that Basel was free from national wars and free to print his books. Erasmus was eminently balanced and moderate. He was a doctor of sacred theology, yet he delighted in poking fun at unimaginative theologians. His Greek text of the New Testament was scholarly and accurate, yet he flayed those pedants who split hairs endlessly in their studies. He believed in complete tolerance, yet was himself deeply intolerant of bigotry.

There are some geniuses who dominate the intellectual life of the ages in which they live—Petrarch in the fourteenth century and Voltaire in the eighteenth. The first half of the sixteenth century was dominated by Erasmus. His influence was felt in intellectual circles everywhere. He corresponded with practically every prominent writer in Europe. He knew personally such men as the English Humanists John Colet and Sir Thomas More, Budé in France, the Medicean Pope Leo x, the emperor of the Holy Roman Empire, and the kings of England and France. He was the scholar of Europe. His writings were read eagerly everywhere.

**In Praise of Folly.** Perhaps his most famous and influential work was *In Praise of Folly*, a satire written in 1511 at the house of Sir Thomas More. The book concerns a female character called Folly, Erasmus' conception of human nature.

"At first the book makes kindly and approving fun of the ways of action and the foibles and weaknesses of mankind. It is not mordant, only amused. But gradually from fools innocent and natural and undebased, it passes to those whose illusions are vicious in their setting and results. Such are stultified grammarians, scribblers, sophisters; such are passionate dicers; and then those addicted to the marvellous and incredible, gaping fools, greedy of strange tales, who ascribe virtue to shrines and images, and to vows made to saints.



A Flemish miniature shows the various steps in glass-making: sand is mixed with alkali and deposited in the furnace; the blower shapes his gather of molten glass on a slab; the finished pieces are shelved.

Worse than such are they who rely on rotten pardons, and think to measure . . . the ages, years, months, days, which they have knocked off from Purgatory. Priests promote these evil follies, and reap gain from them. Now the satire becomes mordant; it ridicules, it lashes the fool-vices, their panders and their votaries; the fool-sophisters, scotists, dabblers in split hairs and things incomprehensible, and the like-minded theologians, with their impossible fool-questions; and then the Monks! These are well scourged. As to kings, allowance is made for the blinding effect of their exalted station; but their courtiers are handled roughly. The discourse pounces upon Popes and Cardinals and bishops; the lashing becomes merciless. Luther might lay on more violently but not more deftly."<sup>9</sup>

Analysis of *In Praise of Folly* yields the significant revelation that only a relatively few scholars and thinkers were enlightened. Superstition and blind reliance on authority were as prevalent then among many scholars as in the earlier centuries. Again, we can see from *In Praise of Folly* that Erasmus was unconsciously preparing the mind of Europe for religious reformation. But he was not one of the leaders of the Protestant revolt. Erasmus was a rationalist, and he saw about him only passions; he was tolerant, and Europe was bleeding from bigotry; and he saw no conflict between secular and religious truth. Erasmus was religious, but he was also "reasonable." He preferred the pen of the scholar to the cross of the martyr.

**Spanish thought.** The Renaissance produced in Spain two outstanding thinkers—Juan Luis Vives (d.1540) and Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra (1547-1616). Vives was a social thinker as well as a Humanist scholar. He declared that the towns should look after the poor in an efficient manner, since the monasteries and clergy neglected their duty. Among his views in the educational field was the belief that girls as well as boys should be given training, especially along moral lines.

Cervantes is remembered because he created two immortal characters, the eccentric but chivalric Don Quixote and the practical but much less gallant Sancho Panza. Tilting at windmills, mistaking serving wenches for high-born ladies, and inns for castles, and lamenting the invention of gunpowder as depriving gallant knights of a chance of winning immor-

talities, Don Quixote is one of the most lovable characters in literature. But more than that, he is the foil by which Cervantes satirizes the bankrupt medieval ideology which still held Spain in its grip.

*Don Quixote* was much more than an amusing novel. It represented a great ideological change, a change from the outworn ideals of the Middle Ages to the newer concepts of modern times. There was something futile in the attempt of the old knight to keep alive the chivalric code in which he was brought up but in which nobody else appeared to take any interest. The world had entered upon a new way of living, one which no longer required horsemen to gallop across the countryside redressing wrongs, one which was infinitely more complex and practical.

**Early Humanism in England.** King Henry VII of England (1485-1509) had little time to play the role of patron, so busy was he consolidating his kingdom after the long-drawn-out Wars of the Roses. The bourgeoisie and a group of Oxford scholars were mainly responsible for the entrance of the Renaissance into England. Thomas Linacre (1460?-1524) taught Greek at Oxford upon his return from Italy, but in addition he brought back the latest medical knowledge, translated Galen's works, and founded the London College of Physicians. The greatest of the early English Humanists was John Colet (1467?-1519), who lectured at Oxford on the literal sense of the Biblical texts. Later he reestablished, along Humanistic lines, the famous old school attached to St. Paul's Cathedral in London, including Ciceronian Latin and Greek in the curriculum. The popularity of the new ideas resulted in the formation of a group of men known as the Oxford Reformers. Although Henry VII had been too deeply interested in statecraft to be a Humanist patron, his son Henry VIII (1509-1547) encouraged the work of Colet and his friends, and England's Renaissance began.

**Sir Thomas More (1478-1535).** Sir Thomas More, the famous humanistic friend of Erasmus in England, has in recent years been canonized for his saintly life and for his martyrdom in opposing Henry VIII's divorce and break with the Church of Rome. But he is better known for his *Utopia*, the first important book since Plato's *Republic*, describing conditions necessary for an ideal state.

In his epoch-making work More criticized the harshness of existing laws and, like Erasmus and Rabelais, denounced the folly of warfare. The second book of *Utopia* attracts our attention particularly, for in it is given a description of Amaurote, the ideal city in the state of Utopia (The Land of Nowhere). The model capital was surprisingly modern. Each dwelling had glass windows and a garden. The city maintained a water supply; the streets were broad (twenty feet, impressively wide for the day); filth was not permitted either in foodstuffs or family dwellings, and everybody had to move every ten years by lot. People worked diligently and planned their day so that they labored only six hours, slept eight hours, and passed their leisure "in some proper exercise according to their various inclinations, which is for the most part reading." A fine international spirit was fostered by the citizens of Utopia, and war was justified only in defense "or in compassion to assist an oppressed nation in shaking off the yoke of tyranny." Education was stressed as a means of preventing crime, and prisoners were taught to work profitably and then were released.

In economic matters, according to More, happiness cannot come while money is the "standard of all other things." Precious metals caused so much internal strife elsewhere that the Utopians showed their contempt for gold and silver by making their pots and kettles out of these metals and by fastening their criminals with gold chains. Finally, the state's goods were distributed equally to every citizen, for More believed the most unworthy tend to obtain the greatest share of wealth.

Undoubtedly *Utopia* was influenced by Plato's *Republic*, for as a Humanist More read Plato avidly and must have been attracted to the idea of putting forward philosophical and sociological principles of an ideal state by means of fiction. In turn, More gave to Francis Bacon and many later writers the incentive to write about ideal societies in fictional form. The word "Utopia" has passed into the language, signifying an ideal society not likely to be achieved, or, as the adjective "Utopian," it means "visionary."

**English poetry.** The English Renaissance of the sixteenth century was notable for its rich and musical poetry. Sir Thomas Wyatt and the Earl of Surrey introduced the Petrarchian sonnet. Sir Philip Sidney wrote the pastoral

romance *Arcadia* and a critical *Defense of Poesy*. Edmund Spenser is chiefly famous for his *Faerie Queene*, in which the best classical and Humanist influences are interwoven with Arthurian romantic elements. The whole poem is an artistic appeal to the patriotic feelings of sixteenth-century Englishmen.

**Early Elizabethan drama.** The most splendid development of Elizabethan literature was in its drama. A majority of the earlier plays conformed to the classical doctrine of the unities of place, time, and action. Among these were the comedies *Ralph Roister Doister* and *Gammer Gurton's Needle* and the tragedy *Gorboduc*, written in 1561.

The reign of Elizabeth witnessed the production of *The Spanish Tragedy* by Thomas Kyd; *The Jew of Malta*, *Doctor Faustus*, and *Tamburlaine* by the brilliant but erratic Christopher Marlowe, and *Every Man in His Humor* and other plays by the famous Ben Jonson, who is today remembered as a poet, dramatist, and critic.

**William Shakespeare (1564-1616).** The greatest writer of all Elizabethan literature—perhaps of all literature—was William Shakespeare. He broke with the classical tradition by violating the doctrine of the unities of time, place, and action and striking out in new and daring concepts. His historical plays reflect the patriotism Englishmen increasingly felt as their country grew stronger and more prosperous. In the following lines we get an insight into the Elizabethan love of country:

This royal throne of kings, this scepter'd isle,  
This earth of majesty, this seat of Mars,  
This other Eden, demi-paradise;  
This fortress built by Nature for herself  
Against infection and the hand of war;  
This happy breed of men, this little world,  
This precious stone set in the silver sea,  
Which serves it in the office of a wall,  
Or as a moat defensive to a house,  
Against the envy of less happier lands;  
This blessed plot, this earth, this realm, this  
England.<sup>10</sup>

Shakespeare's comedies are played today to enthusiastic audiences—*A Comedy of Errors*, *As You Like It*, *The Taming of the Shrew*, *All's Well That Ends Well*, and *The Merchant of Venice*, to mention but a few. In his tragedies—*Hamlet*, *Othello*, *King Lear*, and *Macbeth*—the master dramatist-poet runs the gamut

of human emotions and experience. The rich vocabulary and poetic imagery are matched only by his turbulent imagination. Shakespeare showed typical Renaissance interest in man and the world about him. His plays are concerned first of all with man's personality, passions, and problems. The problems of love and sex are studied from many angles in such works as *Romeo and Juliet*, *Twelfth Night*, *Measure for Measure*, and *Troilus and Cressida*. The passion of jealousy is analyzed in *Othello*, ambition in *Macbeth*, *Richard III*, and *Julius Caesar*, family relationships in *King Lear*, and man's struggle with his environment and circumstances in *Hamlet*. The extraordinary ability of the dramatist to give to every concrete fact or action a universal truth makes the observations of Shakespeare as applicable today as when they were first presented in the Globe Theater.

**Sir Francis Bacon (1561-1626).** A notable contemporary of Shakespeare was Sir Francis Bacon. Like his predecessor Roger Bacon, Francis aimed at divorcing science from authority and Scholasticism; like Montaigne he wrote brilliant essays about everyday matters; and like Sir Thomas More he described a Utopian form of society. His book, known as *The New Atlantis*, resembles *Utopia* in so far as both pretend to give a description of island civilizations. But whereas More concentrated on the sociological aspects of society, Bacon specialized in the technological advances and showed the importance of science in the new cultural plan. "The end of our foundation is the knowledge of causes, and secret motions of things, and the enlarging of the bounds of human empire, to the effecting of all things possible."

Sir Francis Bacon, like Roger, anticipated flying machines, submarines, and many of the later improvements in medicine, surgery, meteorology, and mechanical contrivances. In his ideal society chief interest centered around Solomon's House, the "College of the Six Days Works," which supervises experimentation and inventions.

**Painting in the Low Countries.** Even as Italian Humanism gradually permeated the intellectual life of northern Europe, so the art of the southern peninsula in time crossed the Alps. But certain native departures from medieval methods and conventions preceded the Italian influence.

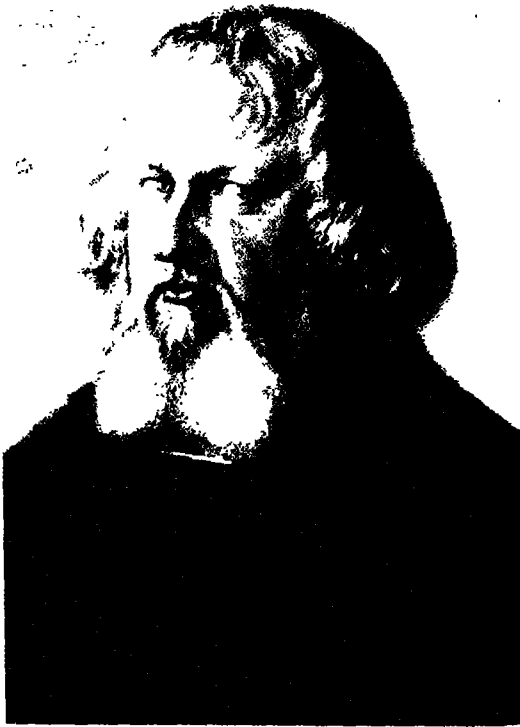


POL DE LIMBOURG: DECEMBER



VAN EYCK: DONOR, DETAIL OF BRUGES MADONNA

In the Low Countries in the fourteenth century there had been a final burst of Gothic manuscript painting. Of this the work of Pol de Limbourg is outstanding. "December," illustrated above, is an example. His tech-



ALBRECHT DÜRER: HIERONYMUS HOLZSCHUHER

nical excellence was great, and his figures show the beginning of the Renaissance interest in people. Much of the Gothic style remains, such as the use of a hedge of trees in the background instead of a landscape in perspective.

In the fifteenth century there was a culmination of medieval painting. Among the many painters the brothers Van Eyck were particularly important. They perfected the oil-glaze technique which was taken to Italy and there used with thick tempera underpainting which gave a very different effect from the enamel-like surface of the Van Eyck painting. Compare the Van Eyck painting at the bottom of the preceding page with Titian's portrait of Pope Paul III, page 452. The fifteenth-century painters flourished under the patronage of wealthy burghers and the dukes of Burgundy. They painted in a detailed, realistic manner, and their paintings reveal many Flemish types of people and costumes. From these paintings can be constructed an accurate picture of the times. Their themes were still mainly conventional medieval ones, however, except that to the figure of the Virgin or saint was often

added the portrait of the donor (see the Van Eyck detail on page 459) and perhaps, too, that of the donor's wife.

**Dürer (1471-1528).** The first great German painter to be influenced deeply by Italian art was Albrecht Dürer of Nuremberg, for he made more than one journey to Italy, where he could not help being impressed by the excellence of the art. However, he did not entirely lose many of the medieval qualities of his native environment, partly because the bourgeois Germans who gave him commissions were still demanding traditional religious subjects. The result was that his work is a blend of the old and the new in art. Dürer received aid from such notables as the emperor of the Holy Roman Empire and Erasmus, and he gained a great reputation with his paintings and even more with his engravings and woodcuts. He among the German painters did most to break away from the prevailing medieval standards of his homeland and incorporate the new ideas of Italy. "Hieronymus Holzschuher" shows the German medieval approach in the careful, rather labored painting of details such as the hair and beard, but his interest in the portrayal of individual character was a departure from the work of his contemporaries.

**Holbein (1497-1543).** The greatest German painter after Dürer was Hans Holbein the Younger. He traveled extensively, doing some of his greatest work in Switzerland and England. He achieved an enviable record as a draftsman, a painter, and a designer of jewelry, glass windows, and woodcuts. In his work the typical northern linear quality was softened to a great extent, but his drawing was still incisive and sharp.

Holbein was less imaginative than Dürer, but whereas Dürer lived in Germany and interpreted its spirit, the younger painter worked abroad, and his work was not quite so national in character. His portrait of Erasmus (page 461), with its strong pattern of light and dark, is still northern in its reserve and sharp detail. Compare the Dürer and Holbein portraits with Titian's (page 452).

The Flemish school gradually fell under the permeating influences of the Italian masters and lost its northern individuality of technique. It became a poor imitation of the art of the south in attempting to copy the Venetian lavishness and love of large, showy paintings.

**Breughel (1525?-1569).** There was one artist, Peter Breughel, who was not influenced by southern tastes but painted with fidelity the faces and scenes of his native land. Breughel painted the life which delighted him the most—village squares, skating scenes, and marriage festivals—and when he painted religious pictures, he did them in the same everyday manner and interpreted Bible stories in terms of life in the Flemish towns. A painting showing the hearty peasant life is "The Wedding Dance," page 462. Notice the patterning of the white blouses and kerchiefs. The style depicting everyday scenes in realistic fashion is known as *genre* painting, and the Flemish painters excelled in it.

**French and English painting.** It took longer for the Renaissance in painting and sculpture to reach France, England, and Spain. Painters from foreign countries were imported for fashionable courts. Francis I invited to his court such Italian masters as Leonardo da Vinci. English artists were also inferior. As a result foreign masters like Hans Holbein were employed by the worldly and sophisticated king, Henry VIII.

**Spread of Renaissance architecture.** The architecture of the Italian Renaissance made particular headway in France during the reign of Francis I. At this time part of the palace of the Louvre was constructed, embodying many Italian ideas. Philip II of Spain built the mag-



HANS HOLBEIN: ERASMUS OF ROTTERDAM

nificent royal palace, the Escorial, between 1563 and 1584; it likewise shows Italian innovations. In Germany Renaissance architects excelled in the construction of town halls and private city dwellings. England slowly began to incorporate the new architectural patterns.

### Summary

In the Middle Ages man had thought of himself primarily as part of a universal order of things, such as the Church and the Holy Roman Empire. But gradually, for a variety of reasons, he began to discover himself and the world about him. This change in attitude, the period in which it occurred, and the ways in which it manifested itself in art, literature, and learning, we call the Renaissance. The change took place earliest in Italy, and first expressed itself in the great intellectual movement—Humanism.

Humanism was in its early stages a revival of the learning of classical times. It became the fashion in Italy to study Greek and to imitate the Latin of Cicero's day, while wealthy patrons brought scholars to their courts and sponsored the search for ancient manuscripts. The reverence for antiquity led to the copying of literary and artistic forms and fashions from ancient Rome and Greece. The homes of the well-to-do became museums for classics of all kinds.

Insofar as Humanism was merely an imitation of the manners and fashions of Greece and Rome, it was sterile and produced little of real value. But there were artists and writers who were stimulated by their study of the classics or were indirectly encouraged





PETER BRUEGEL THE ELDER: THE WEDDING DANCE

by the subtle change in outlook among the scholars of the day to create works of art and literature which broke with the medieval tradition yet did not simply imitate classical compositions. It is impossible to ascribe the new developments in art and literature solely to the influence of the revival of learning, but the study of classical times did help to achieve the following effects: It encouraged men to seek subject matter outside the Church and furnished many new ideas for subjects. It encouraged a certain amount of realism in art in contrast to medieval convention and symbolism. It was one factor behind the new individualism. The medieval emphasis on otherworldliness—the idea that life in this world was only a preparation at best for heaven in the next world—slowly gave way, among the wealthier and better-educated, at least, to a new interest in the world of here and now and the life of the present.

Changes in the economic and political aspects of life likewise brought about distinct changes in man's outlook. The growing concern of the city dweller with affairs of trade and manufacturing undermined the Church's authority, for when church doctrine clashed with material benefit, the new burgher class was apt to disregard censure in favor of making money. The medieval Church concepts of the just price and its ban on usury conflicted with the new urban commercial practices that involved banking and money-lending. As we shall see later, a capitalistic society was taking form at this time.

This new individualistic and realistic attitude manifested itself in various ways, and produced changes of importance in many fields of expression. In literature, stories of flesh-and-blood people supplanted allegories and ideal and unearthly love. Petrarch's *Laura* was a real person, and Boccaccio's *Decameron* was anything but devout. In painting, artists were interested in creating depth and form instead of flat surfaces, developing perspective and the science of light and shade to achieve realistic effects. Oil glaze was used over tempera to give soft and natural modeling. Artists painted mythical scenes and the life around them as much as they did religious pictures, and even religious decorations in churches were often sensuous and worldly. Sculptors and painters portrayed the nude figure and studied anatomy, procedures foreign to the medieval mind.

In architecture the Renaissance contribution was less original. Innovations were in detail and decoration rather than in structural principles. The medieval style was shunned, and much was borrowed from the classic style. The classic, however, was used in a manner that made it typically Renaissance. In the Renaissance, architects who were primarily designers and not engineers made elaborate buildings which were occasionally structural absurdities.

In political theory, the medieval ideal of a universal state ruled by the twin powers of emperor and Pope gave way to the opportunistic individualism expounded by Machiavelli, whose writings were a reflection of what he saw going on around him in Italy. Manners and morals were likewise affected by the new interest in the present. Individuality became a cult, occasionally carried to excesses of self-expression.

Outside Italy the Renaissance in art and literature was partly indigenous and partly an expression of Italian influences. In France it was largely imitative in art, but such literary figures as Rabelais and Montaigne wrote originally and fathered the modern essay. In England Wyatt and Surrey imported Italian forms, but a great native drama developed under the aegis of Shakespeare and lesser writers. In the Low Countries art, before it declined to a mere imitation of Italian models, reflected the rich burgher life. In Germany, as we shall see, the break with medieval tradition took the form of speculative thought and religious criticism, although there were rich developments in the other arts as well.

In all countries the Renaissance of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries was mainly the property of a few people. While countless works of art were available to everyone—decorations for Churches, statues in public squares, and buildings on city streets—the new learning and the new attitudes were almost entirely confined to the upper social classes. They, in fact, sponsored much of the whole movement. Their wealth supplied the artist with his materials, his place to work, and often his subject, and they directed the scholars in their researches and literary productions.

The creations of Renaissance artists and writers were a reflection of the changing attitudes, the enthusiasms, and the lavishness of the age. Though there were many facets to the pattern of developments, and though many different and occasionally conflicting influences were at work, there was common to all creations of the period a new attitude of individuality.

## DECLINE OF THE MEDIEVAL CHURCH: 1296-1660

### Decline of the Church

1296	Boniface VIII issues the Bull, <i>Clericos Laicos</i> <i>Unam Sanctum</i> issued; most sweeping assertion of Pope's temporal power	
1309-1376	"Babylonian Captivity" of papacy at Avignon, France	Authors William of Occam and Marsiglio of Padua call for reformation by church councils
1320?-1384	John Wycliffe assails church abuses	Translates Bible into English
1378-1417	"Great Schism," period of rival Popes	
1395-1450	Conciliar Movement, final failure to limit papal authority	
1415	John Hus burned for heresy	
16th century	Intermittent struggle against Ottoman Turks	
1509-1564	John Calvin, famous Protestant leader, wins many converts	

### The Religious Revolt

1517	Posting of 95 Theses by Martin Luther	
1520	Pope Leo X demands Luther recant	Luther writes <i>An Address to the Nobility of the German Nation, On the Babylonian Captivity, On the Freedom of a Christian Man</i>
1521	Luther excommunicated	Luther translates New Testament into German
1524	Peasants' Revolt in Germany	
1530	Confession of Augsburg becomes creed of Lutheranism	
1531	League of Schmalkalden formed in Germany	
1534	Henry VIII breaks with Rome with <i>Act of Supremacy</i>	

### Catholic Counter-Reformation

1534	Catholic reforms instituted; beginning of the counter-reformation	
	Loyola founds Jesuit Order	
1536	Appearance of important book on systematic theology	Calvin, <i>Institutes of the Christian Religion</i>
1539	Monasteries dissolved and <i>Six Articles</i> passed in England	
1545-1563	Council of Trent: <i>Vulgate</i> issued; Church stands firm on dogma; <i>Index Librorum Prohibitorum</i> ; elimination of many abuses in the Church	

### Political Aspects of the Reformation

1546-1555	War between Catholics and League of Schmalkalden in Germany	
1555	Peace of Augsburg	
1559	<i>Thirty-Nine Articles</i> stamps Protestantism on Anglican Church	
1562-1595	French Religious Wars: Catholics vs. Huguenots	
1566-1648	Revolt of the Netherlands	
1588	Defeat of the Spanish Armada	
1618-1648	Thirty Years' War	
1642-1660	English civil wars	
1648	Peace of Westphalia	

## CHAPTER 17

### *The Ninety-Five Theses*



ON October 31, 1517, a professor of theology by the name of Martin Luther nailed some papers on the door of the Castle Church in Wittenberg. Why he nailed those papers where and when he did and what happened as a result are the story of this chapter. It was the custom of the day to act thus when a man wanted to engage in a scholastic debate with another; in this respect Luther's action was by no means unusual. Yet the forces set in operation by that event in 1517 altered the entire religious and intellectual pattern of the western world. For they launched a great religious revolt that split Christendom from its former basis of unity into innumerable factions and sects. To this day the unity of Christendom has not been restored.

The present chapter, then, is one fraught with significance from the standpoint of religious changes. We have already seen how the era of the Renaissance rebelled ceaselessly against the feudalism, Scholasticism, arts, and otherworldliness of the Middle Ages. The ideal of a universal state was shattered by the rise of aggressive national states. Now, at last, the greatest of all medieval institutions, the universal, all-powerful Church, was to be stripped of its supremacy. The Roman Church had not ceased to act as a great religious and historical force; but the medieval ideal of unity had fallen before the onslaught of Renaissance individualism. Henceforth the Roman Church had to share its influence with other churches, built upon different beliefs and goals.

When Luther and his followers came to believe in doctrines contrary to those held by the Roman Church, they did not try to reform Catholicism but broke away entirely and established their own Church. This movement has often been called the Reforma-

tion, but that term is not quite accurate. There had been periods of "reform" in the Church before, as we have seen, and another was to occur as a result of the forces released by Luther. But the significant action of Luther and his followers was more than reformation; it was a religious revolt. Those who agreed with Luther set up their own churches, denying the exclusive right of the Pope to direct all religious affairs.

What we shall read in the following pages is often the cause for deep regret. It is the story of Christian pitted against Christian, of intolerance, bigotry, and bloodshed. We cannot doubt the sincerity of the true followers of any of the major groups as they sought to establish their beliefs, and so we can understand better how their very zeal brought about unfortunate excesses. But infinitely less easy to excuse is the manner by which religious ideals were debased to serve selfish political ends. What resulted makes some of the most unhappy pages in history.

### *The Decline of the Medieval Church*

**D***angers facing the papacy.* In our discussion of the role of the Church in western Europe in the Middle Ages we saw how that great organization dominated the life of the time. Of all forces shaping the form of medieval culture there can be no doubt that the Church was the most influential. In the thirteenth century the Church seemed unassailable in its prestige, dignity, and power. During the pontificate of Innocent III especially, it appeared completely triumphant. But its strength was already waning.

Papal centralization was harassed by four main forces: (1) the growing national states which rose to take the place of the dying Holy Roman Empire as opponents of the Church's temporal pretensions, (2) the local clergy, who joined with the princes in opposing papal interference in internal matters and who favored the establishment of general church councils to curb the powers of the Pope, (3) reformers who had seen the medieval reformation and the crusades transformed from their original high purposes to suit the ambitions of the pontiffs at Rome, and (4) the growing opposition of the middle classes throughout Europe, whose attitudes toward life had been undergoing some severe changes because of the growth of trade, the exchange of more and more ideas among all classes of people, and a growing feeling of national patriotism and religious self-reliance. The fact was that church domination of the medieval world depended on the continuance of the medieval

world order, and forces were at work which were slowly undermining every aspect of that order. The fourteenth and fifteenth centuries witnessed the collapse of papal supremacy.

**Boniface VIII and temporal rulers.** In the pontificate of the proud Boniface VIII (1294-1303) the papacy was unable to compel such states as England and France to bow down before its commands. The struggle, involving Edward I of England and Philip IV of France, was over the right of the kings to tax the Church for the support of the war they were about to wage with one another. When the Cistercian order in France protested to the Pope about Philip's laying special state taxes upon them, Boniface answered in 1296 with his famous bull *Clericis laicos* (papal bulls are named from the words with which they begin), which forbade the kings to tax the clergy without Rome's consent. Edward retaliated by outlawing all clergy who would not support him. Philip forbade the exporting of all French moneys to Rome, thus jeopardizing the papal financial structure.

Trouble soon broke out again between Boniface and Philip over the right of a secular court to try a member of the clergy, in this instance a bishop. Philip had treated the bishop in a high-handed manner, and the Pope was furiously threatening to correct and even depose the "impious king." Philip in turn stirred up public opinion against Boniface's "great fatuousness." When Philip was defeated in a battle against the Flemish, the

Pope issued his famous bull *Unam Sanctum* in which he maintained that in order to obtain salvation every human creature must be subject to the pontiff of Rome.<sup>1</sup> But his bold assertion had come too late.

Philip now decided to take the advice of his shrewd legal adviser William Nogaret to summon a general council, depose the pontiff, and call a new papal election. Meanwhile, to make Boniface a prisoner of Philip, Nogaret and some accomplices went to the home of Boniface and broke into his palace. But kidnapping failed, and the Pope was taken safely to Rome by his friends, only to die in October of the same year.

**The Avignon papacy.** The success of the French monarchy was as complete as if Boniface had been dragged before Philip. In the election which eventually followed, a French archbishop was chosen Pope. Taking the title of Clement v, he acted according to the wishes of Philip iv, even to the point of taking up his residence at Avignon, where he was subject to French influence, instead of at Rome. From 1309 to 1376 the Popes remained at Avignon. This period has been called the Babylonian Captivity of the Church. The loss to papal prestige was enormous. The Romans resented the lack of the court and the revenues, the English justifiably accused the Popes of favoring the French kings, the Germans resented the claims of the Pope to temporal power over the emperor of the Holy Roman Empire, and all Christendom believed that Rome was the only rightful capital for the Church.

The Avignon papacy had the following general effects: (1) its shortcomings gave men the opportunity to attack church corruption, papal temporal pretensions, and the spiritual authority of the Roman hierarchy, (2) it alienated the obedience and support of England and the Holy Roman Empire, (3) it stimulated questioning, especially by John Wycliffe in England, about the divinity of the papal office and the sacramental system, bringing on much heresy, and (4) it produced a cry from such writers as William of Occam and Marsiglio of Padua for reformation by church councils.

**The Great Schism.** The sad state of papal conditions in Italy prompted Gregory xi to return to Rome in 1377. A betterment of conditions seemed at hand, but Gregory died the following year. The Roman multitude

demanded in loud voice that an Italian Pope be elected, and their demand was met with the election of Urban vi. However, the French cardinals maintained that the election was invalid because of outside pressure on the voters, and, retiring to Avignon once again, they elected a Frenchman who took the title of Clement vii.

The Church was now in an even worse state than it had been during the Babylonian Captivity. There were two Popes, each claiming universal sovereignty, each with his college of cardinals and capital, each sending forth papal administrators and taxing Christendom, and each excommunicating the other as the "anti-Christ." The nations of Europe, of course, gave allegiance as their individual political interests prompted them. France supported Clement, as did Scotland, Navarre, Castile, and Aragon. Urban found his strength in Italy, England, Portugal, Flanders, and most of northern, central, and eastern Europe. But in order to keep the allegiance of the various countries, the rival Popes had to make concessions, such as abandoning to a large extent the practice of interfering in national politics.

Religious life also suffered. The Great Schism, as the split in the papacy was called, had become an international disgrace.

"Christendom looked upon the scandal helpless and depressed, and yet impotent to remove it. With two sections of Christendom each declaring the other lost, each cursing and denouncing the other, men soberly asked who was saved. The longer the schism lasted, the more difficult did it seem to heal it, and yet people generally felt that for that very reason positive action was all the more necessary. The very sublimity of papal pretensions made earthly jurisdiction and compulsory abdication seem very difficult. Still the fact stared Europe in the face that the schism itself, with the cupidity, selfishness, and meanness accompanying it, had shattered the sanctity of papal claims in breaking up the unity of Christendom."<sup>2</sup>

**The Conciliar Movement.** Positive action came in the form of the Conciliar Movement. In 1395 the doctors of the University of Paris (as Europe's chief theologians) suggested that if the two claimants to the papal throne would not abdicate, a "general council of all the Church should be held. The Popes would not abdicate nor arbitrate their differences. So

in 1409 a majority of the cardinals of both camps met at the Council of Pisa, deposed both pontiffs, and elected a third man. But neither of the two deposed Popes would give up his office, and the papal throne now had three claimants.

Such an intolerable situation necessitated the calling of other church councils. In 1414 Emperor Sigismund assembled at the Council of Constance the most impressive church gathering ever known. For the first time voting was done on the basis of four nations—French, English, Italian, and German. This was highly significant as an indication that the new tendency toward nationalistic alignments was being recognized by the Church. Finally, through the deposition of the line of Popes started by the Council of Pisa, the Roman Popes succeeded, in the election of Martin V in 1417, to a virtually uncontested supremacy in the Church once more. The Great Schism was ended.



*Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini, later Pope Pius II, sets out for the Council of Basel. The most versatile and brilliant of all the "literary" Popes, Piccolomini was a lifelong foe of Conciliar reform.*

**Heresy: Wycliffe and Hus.** Other great problems facing the Church had not been solved, however. The growth of heresy had been very great in the fourteenth century. The *Vision of Piers Plowman* in England mercilessly upbraided in verse the corruption, ignorance, and worldliness of the clergy. During the Avignon papacy there had also appeared in England a master of Oxford by the name of John Wycliffe (1320?-1384) who assailed not only church abuses but, what was more dangerous, church doctrines. Briefly, he believed that the Church should be subordinate to the state, that salvation was primarily an individual matter between man and God, that transubstantiation as taught by the Church was false, and that outward rituals and veneration of relics were idolatrous. Wycliffe was really the dawn-star of the Protestant revolt. He formed bands of poor priests, called Lollards, who taught his views, and he translated the Bible into English, a great service to literature and the common people.

Wycliffe's ideas were taken up especially in Bohemia by Bohemian students who had heard him at Oxford. The greatest of the Bohemian heretics was John Hus (1369?-1415), a patriot, ardent preacher, and propagator of Wycliffe's radical views. So popular did his doctrines become and so great was his influence that the Church decided to take him in hand. He was given a safe-conduct to the Council of Constance (which had as its purpose not only the healing of the schism but also the stamping out of heresy and reform of the papacy), but because Hus did not recant from his position, the Council condemned him, and he was burned at the stake in spite of his safe-conduct. But heresy was not stamped out by such action. On the contrary, it served only to make Hus a martyr and to strengthen the doctrines for which he had died. Hus was burned in 1415, but the faggots which had cost him his life were kept burning by his heresies for a century and set ablaze in Luther's declarations of 1517 a conflagration which was to consume all Europe.

**The failure of internal reform.** The Church had demonstrated by the Council of Constance that it possessed in the Conciliar Movement the means of reforming itself. But the movement was not to endure. There was a fundamental conflict between church councils and church Popes, for both claimed supreme

power. With Martin v's resumption of headship of all the Church, together with the inability of the Conciliar Movement to bring about much-needed reforms at the councils of Pavia and Basel, the Popes managed by 1450 to discredit the Conciliar Movement entirely.

The Popes refused to reform themselves and forbade the calling of a council to attempt the job. Therefore, no great council was called until 1550, when the Council of Trent was summoned to reform a Church which had already irreparably lost many countries to Protestantism. The Conciliar Movement represented a reforming and democratizing influence in the Church. It aimed at transforming the papacy into something like a limited monarchy. If it could not find expression inside the Catholic Church, it would find expression outside that body. A break was inevitable, especially as the Popes now busied themselves not in reform but in Italian politics and devoted their time to becoming patrons of the arts in the Italian Renaissance.

**Reasons for Church decline.** Having related the decline of the Church from 1300 to about 1500, we can logically ask what were the major causes for the decline of the once all-powerful institution. Alexander Clarence Flick, a noted church historian, in *The Decline of the Medieval Church* has divided these into causes that existed within the church structure itself and those which were weakening it from the outside. In the first category can be placed (1) the growing formal nature of much of the church worship, (2) the failure of the Church to keep pace with intellectual developments taking place in the outside world, (3) the immorality of many of the clergy, (4) the concentration of all power over the Church in the hands of the Pope. In the second category can be listed (1) the rise of skepticism, (2) the development of nationalism and the growing reluctance of national monarchs to obey any alien institution, even the Church, (3) the intellectual results of printing, which hastened the spread of the new secular spirit of the Renaissance, and (4) the revolutionary changes in the economic field, such as the rise of capitalism, the growth of the middle class, and the expansion of Europe, forces that were bound to undermine the power of the Church.<sup>3</sup> All of these factors blended into a complex pattern of causes to bring about what is usually

known as the Religious Revolt, by which the unchallenged authority of the once universal Church was destroyed.

**New attitudes.** While these causes can explain much of the Church's loss of prestige, the loss of its once universal power needs fuller explanation. The spirit of the Middle Ages was one of faith, devotion to institutions—the feudal order, the guild, and the Church—and denial of the importance of the individual. It was this spirit which fed the universal strength of the Church. The Renaissance changed the spirit. Man became conscious of his own importance. He became assertive. He came to revolt against all institutions which prevented him from acting as he wished. So he broke away from feudalism in order that he might become an urban merchant. Later he preferred to be a free businessman rather than a member of a merchant guild. And finally he created his own politically independent national state rather than be subordinated to an Empire.

He was finding himself quite out of sympathy with the Church's economic concepts of the "just price" and anti-usury statutes, for they conflicted with the new capitalism, while the Church's spiritual dictates demanded complete obedience and self-abnegation. Furthermore, the Church at this time presented a dangerous contradiction. In dogma it was medieval, yet its highest officials, including even the Popes, were patrons of a Renaissance culture deriving its inspiration from pagan Greece and Rome.

Thus it was not simply that the Church stood in need of correcting its financial and moral abuses. The Church's ideals no longer commanded the same respect and allegiance among all the population. A soldier who had fought in the Hundred Years' War could not fail to realize that the names England and France had a new meaning for him, the merchant whose ships traveled to newly discovered lands and the banker whose loans made those journeys possible could not help rejoicing in their new economic independence, and the reader of books just off the recently invented printing press was going to have his traditional views challenged from new quarters. The ideal of the Middle Ages was otherworldliness; the ideal of the Renaissance was presentworldliness. The Church favored the first ideal. The rise of some leader with a religious message more compatible with the spirit



of the new age was inevitable. It was also inevitable that when he arose he should use as his weapon not the incongruity of the Church's ideology, for that was a philosophical problem of which few were conscious, but rather the

financial and moral abuses of the Church, of which almost everyone was aware. As we are about to see, the leader with the new message did arise, and he won his converts with the weapon which we have described.

### *The Religious Revolt*

**The revolt in Germany.** The religious revolt began in Germany. Scholastic philosophy and the traditional faith were more firmly entrenched among the Germans than among the Italians. The burgher piously read his *Imitation of Christ*, written by a German mystic, Thomas à Kempis. He resented deeply the corrupt financial and moral abuses of the papacy. The invention of printing in the north had stimulated reading and critical scholarship among all the German people, with the result that they began to study the Scriptures very carefully and at the same time to criticize the ignorance of the German clergy.

The political situation in the German states also had a bearing on the religious question. Germany was divided into hundreds of states, lacking unity except for the nominal rule of the weak, elective emperor of the Holy Roman Empire. Therefore patriots could be expected to make use of a German religious revolt to further the cause of German nationalism at the expense of an Italian-controlled Empire and Church. Nor must the economic aspect of the situation be overlooked. Trade and banking flourished in the fast-growing Rhenish towns. The Hanseatic League was prospering. The German burgher found no conflict between piety and profits. On the other hand, his piety and profits were both affected by the draining of German revenues by the Roman Church, especially when unscrupulous means were used to gather them. Germany was ripe for religious changes.

**Martin Luther.** On November 10, 1483, a poor German couple became the parents of a son, later baptized Martin Luther. In 1491 Hans, the father, joined a firm of copper miners. Twenty years later by virtue of thrift and hard work Hans Luther was a petty capitalist.

Martin was often given the rod that he might not be spoiled. He was also given a sound education which included university studies. He accepted as a matter of course

the beliefs prevalent among the common people regarding witchcraft and other superstitions, with the result that to the end of his life Luther believed vividly in the existence of devils and witches. Indeed, the story goes that he once threw an ink pot at the devil, whom he thought he saw leering at him. In 1505 he became a member of the mendicant order of Augustinian monks, at first much to the disgust of his practical-minded father, who nearly disowned him. In 1508 he was given a temporary lectureship at the recently founded University of Wittenberg. Within a few years he had become professor of theology.

The next few years were epochal, not only in Luther's own life but also in the history of religious thought. He began to probe deeply the problem of eternal salvation. As we have seen in a previous chapter, the Church taught that salvation could not be gained without the good works prescribed by it. Luther felt that man was so depraved in God's sight that no amount of good works could possibly save him. One day, while contemplating the words of St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans, Luther found these words: "For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith."<sup>4</sup> He felt that his problem was solved. Man was saved only by his faith in the validity of Christ's sacrifice, which alone could wash away sin. Luther had come to his famous doctrine of "justification by faith" as opposed to the Roman Church's "justification by sacraments and works."

The implications of his radical doctrine were enormous. If salvation could come only through a personal belief in Christ's sacrifice, then an interceding priesthood became superfluous, for each man would then be his own priest. But Luther himself had no idea as yet what his views meant or where they would eventually lead him and half of Christendom. It required a financial abuse of the Church, not a theological subtlety, to bring on the religious revolt.

**Tetzel and the indulgences.** Leo x, a cultured scion of the Medici family, "who would have made an excellent Pope if he had only been a little religious," wanted to complete the magnificent new Cathedral of St. Peter's in Rome. But money for the costly enterprise was lacking. Several papal agents were sent out to dispose of indulgences as a means of raising money. One of these agents, by the name of Tetzel, discharged his mission "in the German archbishopric of Mainz in a manner which would be recognized in America today as high-pressure salesmanship."<sup>5</sup>

The position of the Church in regard to indulgences has been much misunderstood. An indulgence never permitted a person to sin. Rather, it was a promise of remission of part or the whole of the penalty which a person must receive after death on account of his sins. The indulgence demands that the sinner repent of his deeds and do some form of penance. The penitent had to perform good works by saying prayers, visiting shrines, or donating money for worthy ecclesiastical purposes.

The common people held a wrong view of the practice. Most of them could not read the language of the indulgence, and they thought that a payment of money was all that was required to escape both the temporal and eternal penalties of sin. Because Tetzel did nothing to enlighten the populace as to the true nature of indulgences but rather exhorted them to give liberally for themselves and for their dead relatives in purgatory who were "crying to them for help," Luther angrily questioned the validity of the whole system of indulgences.

**Luther's ideas developed.** In October, 1517, Luther, following a university custom, posted ninety-five propositions (theses) on the subject of indulgences on the church door at Wittenberg, at the same time challenging anyone to debate them with him. In so acting Luther was not just protesting the unscrupulous methods of Tetzel; he was questioning the whole philosophy of good works. Here are some of the more important theses:

"11. The erroneous opinion that canonical penance and punishment in purgatory are the same assuredly seems to be a tare sown while the bishops were asleep.

"21. Therefore those preachers of indulgences err who say that a papal pardon frees



*A woodcut depicts the issuing of letters of indulgence at a German market place in Martin Luther's time.*

a man from all penalty and assures his salvation.

"28. It is certain that avarice is fostered by the money chinking in the chest, but to answer the prayers of the Church is in the power of God alone.

"43. Christians are to be taught that he who gives to the poor or lends to one in need does better than he who buys indulgences."<sup>6</sup>

The ninety-five theses were originally written in Latin. They were soon translated into the common tongue and by March, 1518, were quite well known throughout Germany. The Church at Rome did not seriously trouble itself at first. Heresy was anything but new, as the history of the Waldensians, Albigensians, Wycliffe, and Hus showed. But this particular "squabble among monks" (as Leo x dismissed the matter) did not subside. In 1519 Luther debated with an eminent Catholic theologian, Johann Eck, and conceded there that he believed a man could possess a direct relationship with God without the need of the Church's mediation. It was the same view for which Hus had been burned by the Council of Constance.

Luther now found himself propelled by circumstances and the implications of his philosophy to a position far removed from that of the Church. In 1520 he separated himself completely by publishing three pamphlets. In *An Address to the Nobility of the German Nation* he maintained that the priesthood was not sacred and that the nobles should free Germany from Roman control and take over the wealth and lands of the Church for themselves. *On the Babylonian Captivity* attacked



*Martin Luther defies the Pope's decree by burning the papal bull while students and townsfolk applaud.*

both the papacy and the sacramental system. A third pamphlet, *On the Freedom of a Christian Man*, set forth Luther's new views on salvation.

In June, 1520, the Pope issued the bull *Exsurge Domine*, which gave Luther sixty days to cease from his heretical course. If at the end of that time he had not confessed his errors, he was to be cut off from the Church and handed over to secular authorities for punishment. In December, 1520, Luther publicly burned the bull amid the applause of students and townsmen. The eyes of all the German people now turned in the direction of a man who had been suddenly transformed from an obscure monk into a prominent reformer and political figure.

Events of momentous importance now occurred in quick succession. On January 3, 1521, Leo X issued a bull of excommunication, and four months later the Diet of the Holy Roman Empire declared Luther an outlaw. Luther, however, was given protection by Frederick, elector of Saxony, at whose castle the reformer translated the New Testament into German, a literary feat of outstanding importance in the development of the German language.

**Spread of Lutheranism in Germany.** Very quickly the teachings of Luther swept through central and northern Germany. Pious persons who wanted the Church reformed saw good in the cause. Worldly individuals wanted to appropriate church lands and therefore aided the movement. Patriots who saw in the movement a chance to unite Germany backed Luther. Emperor Charles V, a Catholic, was

too deeply involved in a war with Francis I of France to stamp out the new heresy. Finally, the ceaseless activity of Luther in writing pamphlets and directing his party led to a Lutheran triumph.<sup>7</sup>

A revolt broke out in 1524. The German peasants, ground down by the nobles and wealthier classes, demanded abolition of serfdom, payment in wages, and other improvements of their lot. Their grievances were legitimate and their demands reasonable. While the Catholic clergy appeared to be a main object of their wrath, Luther supported the peasants. However, when he saw that they were rising also against lay lords, many of whom were now espousing the principles of Luther, the reformer turned savagely on them and asked the princes to put down the peasants' revolt. "Therefore let every one who can, strike, strangle, stab secretly or in public, and let him remember that nothing can be more poisonous, harmful, or devilish than a man in rebellion."<sup>8</sup>

The revolt was stamped out in 1525 at a cost of about fifty thousand lives, and the lot of the German peasant for the next two centuries was probably the worst in Europe. Luther had become a false prophet to these serfs, and Lutheranism received a serious check. The conservatism of Luther, who felt that the equality of all men before God applied in spiritual but not in secular matters, made aliens of the peasants but allies of the princes.

The Diet of the Holy Roman Empire met again in 1526; here the princes of Germany were divided into a Lutheran and a Catholic party. The imperial Diet was composed of the seven electors, the lesser princes, and representatives of the free cities. The emperor was not supposed to do anything affecting the various states in the Empire without the approval of the body. The legal status of the Lutherans was not settled at the meeting, but the Diet ordered that "each prince should so conduct himself as he could answer for his behavior to God and to the emperor."<sup>9</sup> In 1529 the Diet was told by the emperor that heresy must be uprooted. The Mass was not to be interfered with anywhere. This meant that, while Lutheran activities were restricted, those of the Catholics could be carried on even in Lutheran areas. The Lutheran leaders naturally dissented, drawing up a protest which said that they would adhere only to the law of 1526.

From such a protest arose the word Protestant.

The Diet, meeting in 1530 at Augsburg, was presented by Philip Melancthon, the scholarly colleague of Luther, with a "reformed confession," called the Augsburg Confession. His document was a statement of Christian doctrine from the Lutheran viewpoint and was designed to conciliate the two parties. The Diet did not accept the confession, but it became the creed of the new faith.

**Schmalkaldic Wars and the Peace of Augsburg.** The emperor now made public his intention to crush the growing heresy. In defense the Lutheran princes banded together in the League of Schmalkalden in 1531, and from 1546 to 1555 sporadic civil war resulted. Finally in 1555 a compromise was reached through the Peace of Augsburg. This allowed each prince to decide the religion of his subjects, gave Protestants the right to keep all church property appropriated prior to 1552, forbade all sects of Protestantism other than Lutheranism, and ordered all Catholic bishops to give up their property if they turned Lutheran.

The implications of the provisions were great. For the first time in Christian history religious opinions became the private property of princes. The theories of political absolutism and the divine right of kings were thus given a strong impetus. Again, the Peace of Augsburg established Lutheranism as a state religion in large portions of Germany. Lastly, the new Protestantism did not bestow political or religious liberty on the individual. The individual had to believe what his prince wanted him to believe, be it Lutheranism or Catholicism. The Peace of Augsburg marks the real beginning of state religion, the natural ally of the new national political state now ripe for development throughout Europe.

The reference to Catholic property in the settlement was important, for it had been the cause of much bitterness. Following Luther's religious revolt many nobles accepted his teachings not because they necessarily believed them but because it gave them an excuse to seize the Church's property. Wholesale plundering of church lands enriched many a noble, and there was little prospect of peace until some arrangement suitable to both sides had been worked out. It was realized in the agreement of 1555, for the Protestant princes retained their hold on the lands they had already

seized, while at the same time the Church was promised that the seizures would be discontinued.

**The death of Luther.** Meanwhile, the founder of the new faith died in 1546. Martin Luther had been a born leader, genius, bigot, and zealot. As Preserved Smith says, "His grandest quality was sincerity. Priest and public man as he was, there was not a line of hypocrisy or cant in his whole being."<sup>10</sup> His life was molded by the belief that he was absolutely right in his acts, which explains both his driving power and his intolerance. He put his trust in faith and not in the "harlot" reason. In this respect Luther represents a step backward in intellectual history to medievalism, a step far different from the one taken by such Humanists as Erasmus.

In closing our account of Luther and the gigantic movement which he set on foot, it is of interest to point out an irony of history. The money which was gathered for the purpose of creating for the universal Church a fitting capital in St. Peter's at Rome was the same money which destroyed the Church's universality. It is a strange capital which is built to glorify its own destruction. Only the Palace of Versailles, the symbol of absolutism in France, can equal this circumstance.

**Lutheranism in Scandinavia.** Lutheranism affected all the regions about the Empire. However, it established itself permanently only in Scandinavia. By 1560 Denmark established a national Church. The Augsburg Confession was adopted, the Bible was translated into Danish, and Catholic and Protestant dissenters of other sects were suppressed. Norway was at this time part of Denmark, and Lutheranism triumphed there also. Sweden, under Gustavus Vasa, rebelled against the union of the Scandinavian countries, and in 1523 Vasa became king of Sweden. During his rule (1523-1560) Protestantism was introduced; the religious change was interwoven with the nationalist cause. More than once it appeared possible during the sixteenth century that Catholicism might win back its lost power in Sweden, but Lutheranism triumphed. In 1593 the Confession of Augsburg was officially adopted by the Swedish Church, and in 1604 Catholics lost their property and offices.

**Background of the English Revolt.** The religious revolt in Germany arose principally because numbers of people were shocked by

the moral and financial evils of the Catholic Church and because they were led by a fanatically religious leader. Therefore in Germany the revolt was primarily religious in nature, although it possessed political implications. In England the situation was reversed. True, there was an ecclesiastical revolt, but the leader was a king, not a commoner. Furthermore, he did not consider himself a Protestant but was proud of his title "Defender of the Faith"—that is, of Catholicism. Basically, moreover, the revolt was political in nature, with the religious implications of a secondary value.

The Anglican (English) revolt had its basis in the very history of the kingdom. England had lately gone through a bitter civil conflict, the Wars of the Roses. In 1485 a strong leader of the Tudor family mounted the throne, taking the title Henry VII. The king had a double aim: to make his family's position on the throne secure and to make England a strong national state. He was successful in his double aim for the following reasons: England was no longer a simple agricultural country. Lands were being enclosed for the purpose of sheep raising; at the same time, towns were springing up, and in them the wool from the sheep was made into cloth. Shipping developed as a logical sequence, for traders found a ready market on the continent for this growing export. Thus the bourgeoisie became increasingly stronger and wealthier. The landowners also became wealthy and sought to obtain by one means or another the rich lands which the Church had acquired through centuries of gifts and expansion. The Tudors, a new family looked down on by the old aristocrats, saw the future of England's power in the townsmen and landowners. Henry VII encouraged trade and peaceful pursuits, curbed the restless nobility, and thus became very popular with the bourgeoisie.

A national state must sooner or later clash with an international Church when the Church claims the right to interfere in the temporal affairs of the state. The brilliant and much-married Henry VIII, son of the first Tudor, embarked upon a policy designed to place the Church under the direct control of the monarch. In England there had been signs for several centuries that the English government as well as the people were getting more and more restive at papal control. We recall the quarrel of Henry II in the twelfth century with

his archbishop, Thomas à Becket, over the jurisdiction of the royal courts over clerics who had committed crimes. Then in the reign of Edward I the famous Statute of Mortmain was designed to protect the interests of the overlord when land was alienated from the Church. The so-called provisor system especially irked the English people. It was an arrangement by which the Pope demanded the right to fill clerical positions in England with his own appointees, usually from Italy. One Pope demanded that three hundred positions be reserved for appointees selected from leading Roman families. Many of the papal appointees never even came to England but had substitutes, usually Englishmen, who did all the work, while they remained in Italy enjoying the revenues of their office.

Agitation against the papacy reached a high pitch in the fourteenth century. In 1351 the Statute of Provisors declared invalid all papal appointments to English church benefices, and the following year the Statute of Praemunire made illegal the carrying of suits to foreign courts. The papal court was not mentioned, but the statute was directly aimed against the practice of taking cases to that court. The Church seemed to be able to evade many of these restrictions. It continued to get more and more land. Its income was said to be greater in England alone than that of the English king, and all church officers were expected to send to Rome a payment called annates, which was equivalent to the income of their office the first year they held their post.

The religious revolt in England, then, was not a sudden growth but a movement that had been maturing for several hundred years. By the time Henry VIII came to the throne, the smallest happening could precipitate a crisis between the monarchy and the papacy. It is idle to discuss whether the Tudor king really deliberately planned the break from the Church. In the early phases of the revolt in England it seems likely that Henry had no intention of breaking from the Church if he could have his way on the divorce question we shall shortly discuss. Unlike the revolt in Germany, that in England had at its inception no quarrel with the doctrines of the Church. The Anglican revolt threw off the supremacy of the Pope without adopting the Protestant faith. The elements of Protestantism in the new Anglican Church crept in after the break with

Rome. The revolt centers about the private ambitions and amours of Henry VIII.

*Henry VIII's quarrel with Rome.* In his youth Henry was handsome and athletic, and his joviality made him beloved of the people. He was the second son of Henry VII, his older brother Arthur being the heir apparent. The crafty and miserly Henry VII had engaged Arthur to Catherine, the daughter of Ferdinand and Isabella of Spain. A large dowry was to be paid the Tudors with the marriage. Unfortunately Arthur died in 1502, shortly after his marriage to Catherine, and part of the dowry was left unpaid. Henry VII, wishing both the dowry and the alliance with Spain, then married Henry to Catherine. To this union six children were born, of whom only one, Mary, survived.

Then came the conflict in Henry VIII's mind. First of all, although legally Henry did not need a male heir, one was desirable if the newly established Tudors were to endure as a dynasty and England was to be spared another bloody War of the Roses. Thoughts may have assailed him that he had never properly been married to Catherine. She was the widow of his brother, and since the Church forbade a man to marry his brother's widow, a special papal dispensation for Henry's marriage had been required. Therefore, he may have feared that God in his displeasure had denied him a son. There was another reason for conflict in Henry's mind, a much more tangible reason. A young attendant in the queen's suite by the name of Anne Boleyn had attracted Henry, and it was not long before he sought her as his wife.

Henry asked Pope Clement VII to revoke the dispensation which had allowed him to marry Catherine. The Pope would gladly have acquiesced to Henry's wishes, for Henry had been a staunch supporter of the old faith in England. He had personally written a *Defense of the Seven Sacraments* (1521) in answer to Luther's pamphlet *On the Babylonian Captivity*. A fierce war of words had been waged between Luther and the king's supporters, Luther calling Henry "a damnable and rotten worm, a snivelling, drivelling swine of a sophist,"<sup>11</sup> and Sir Thomas More, representing Henry, complaining of the language of "this apostate, this open incestuous lecher, this plain limb of the devil and manifest messenger of hell."<sup>12</sup> At any rate, Henry's devotion to

the Catholic faith had won him the title "Defender of the Faith," a title which the English kings still possess. But now the Pope, much as he wished, could not support Henry's desires for two reasons: It might be dangerous for one Pope to reverse the judgments of a predecessor, and, second, the emperor Charles V, the most powerful monarch in Europe, was a nephew of Catherine and threatened the Pope severely if he declared the marriage null and void. Clement decided to wait awhile before giving his answer, hoping in the meantime that events would take care of themselves.

Henry would not wait. His chief advisor, Cardinal Thomas Wolsey, who had served his king well for years, had now failed to obtain the all-important consent of the Pope. Angrily Henry vented his wrath upon the hapless official. Deprived of his office and disgraced, Wolsey died in 1530, barely escaping the headsman's ax. In 1531 he fined the English clergy a large sum of money on a mere technicality, compelling them to acknowledge the king as "their singular protector, only and supreme lord, and, as the law of Christ allows, even Supreme Head." He next had his Parliament cease sending annates to Rome and give him the power to appoint bishops in England without the Pope's permission. Henry now went further. He appointed as archbishop of Canterbury a willing tool named Thomas Cranmer, who was sure to do his master's bidding. Cranmer pronounced Henry's marriage to Catherine invalid. Immediately afterward Henry's marriage to Anne Boleyn was declared legal. Clement VII, at last goaded into action, excommunicated Henry and maintained that Catherine alone was the king's true wife.

Henry completely severed all connections with Rome in 1534. The *Act of Supremacy* stated that the king "justly and rightfully is and ought to be supreme head of the Church of England." Two of England's most gifted men, Sir Thomas More (author of the famous *Utopia*) and the saintly bishop John Fisher, were beheaded because they could not approve of Henry's assumption of so much authority over the Church. To gain popular approval, Henry suppressed the rich monasteries, giving much of the land to the willing landowners for their sheep raising, making them fellow conspirators. By 1539 all monastic houses were dissolved. That same year Parliament passed the *Six Articles*, which reaffirmed the main

points of Catholic theology, and the Catholic who denied the supremacy of the king and the Protestant who denied the validity of transubstantiation were alike punished severely.

In all this development, Parliament took a leading role, enacting the several necessary laws.

**Protestantism under succeeding rulers.** After Henry's death in 1547 his frail son mounted the throne as Edward VI. During this reign England advanced toward a more definite Protestantism. The *Six Articles* were repealed. Through the efforts of Cranmer the *Book of Common Prayer* translated the old Latin service into English. Priests were no longer held to their vows of celibacy. Many religious works of art were destroyed. In 1553 the *Forty-Two Articles* defined the faith of the Church of England along Protestant lines. Under the devoutly Catholic Mary (1553-1558), the unfortunate daughter of the still more unfortunate Catherine of Aragon, England experienced a Catholic reaction, and hundreds of heretics, including Archbishop Cranmer, were put to death.

But with the accession to the throne of Anne Boleyn's red-headed and fiery-tempered daughter, Elizabeth (1558-1603), Protestantism was firmly and permanently reestablished in England. Elizabeth astutely took the title "Supreme Governor" of the Anglican Church. Her *Act of Uniformity* (1559) made the acceptance of the revised Prayer Book obligatory. The *Thirty-Nine Articles* (three of the *Forty-Two Articles* passed in Edward's reign were deleted) stamped Protestantism upon the Anglican Church in their emphasis upon the Scriptures as the source of authority. To this day the *Thirty-Nine Articles* have remained the authoritative statement of Anglican theology. Elizabeth did not really care what her subjects believed inwardly, but they had to conform outwardly.

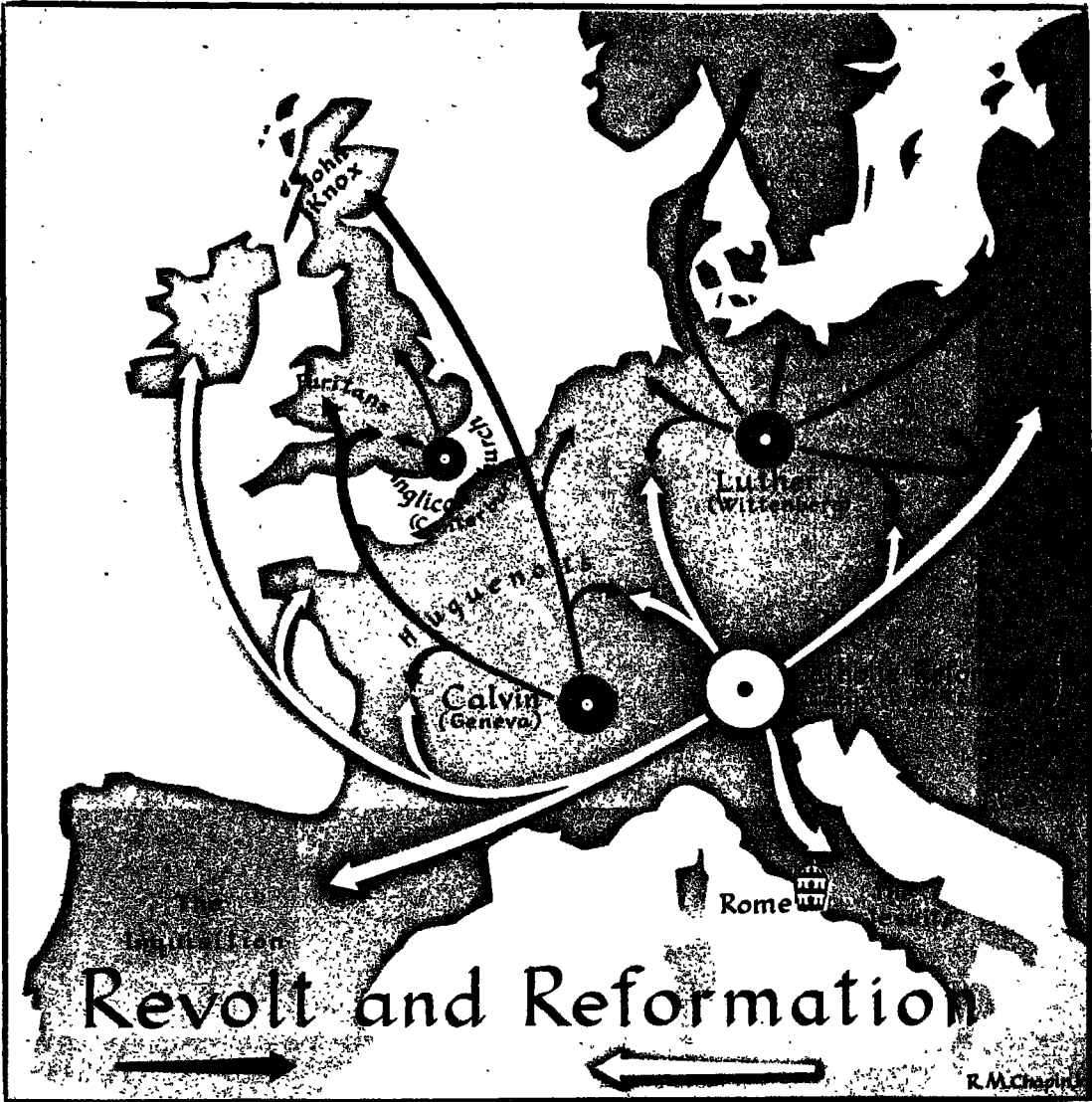
**Calvinism.** The most famous sixteenth-century Protestant leader next to Luther was John Calvin (1509-1564). A Frenchman of the middle class, Calvin studied theology and law at Paris, where he became interested in Luther's teachings. About 1533 he had what he called a "conversion," whereby he deserted Catholicism. When Francis I decided to persecute heretics, Calvin fled to Switzerland, finally taking up his abode at Geneva. There he spent the remainder of his life, acquiring complete

political power by means of a constitution which made him the real ruler of the city. His constitution created a theocratic republic in which the administration of religion and politics were blended into one organization.

In 1536 he published his great work, the *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, unquestionably one of the most important books on systematic theology ever written. The definitive edition of 1559 contained his mature views on theology, the most famous being his theory of predestination. According to Calvin, God is omnipotent; He knows the past, present, and future. Therefore He must always know what men are to be saved by Him and what men are to be damned eternally. "And His act was purely arbitrary; He foreknew and predestined the fate of every man from the beginning; He damned and saved irrespective of foreseen merit."<sup>13</sup> Calvin maintained that the outward sign of a man's election to grace is his moral behavior. Therefore when Calvin came to dictatorial power in Geneva, he saw to it that every man's moral acts were judged vigorously. The city's 16,000 inhabitants were spied upon and punished for acts considered heretical or immoral by Calvin and the elders. During the years 1542-1546 the little town witnessed fifty-eight executions and seventy-six banishments. The theater was banned as immoral, bright colors in dress were forbidden, swearing and dancing were punished, and nobody was allowed to sit up in the inns after nine o'clock at night except spies. As Preserved Smith says, "Calvin also pronounced on the best sort of stoves and got servants for his friends. In fact, there was never such a busybody in a position of high authority before or since."<sup>14</sup>

Calvin punished with ferocity those holding religious views other than his own. One man wrote "all rubbish" on one of Calvin's tracts and was put on the rack twice a day, morning and evening, for a whole month. When Servetus, a scholarly Unitarian, fled to Geneva as a place of refuge, Calvin prosecuted him for heresy, saying that his defense was "no better than the braying of an ass, and that the prisoner was like a villainous cur wiping his muzzle."<sup>15</sup> Servetus was sentenced to be burned.

Yet despite his bigotry and self-righteousness Calvin possessed an austerity of spirit and power of mind which could not fail to influence religious thought. Calvinism made many converts in France, especially among the bour-



geoisie. The French Calvinists were known as Huguenots and comprised about three to five per cent of the total population. Later we shall see how the Huguenots became involved in French religious wars.

**The spread of Calvinism.** The teaching of Calvin came down the Rhine River to the northern Netherlands, where it was known as the Dutch Reformed religion. The fact that the Dutch fought for their independence against a Catholic king of Spain helped establish Protestantism in their country. Meanwhile in Scotland the authority of the old Church had been challenged. This was the work of John Knox, a zealous reformer who

had made the acquaintance of Calvin in Geneva. He returned to Scotland and became leader of the Lords of the Congregation, a movement of Protestant nobles who desired to overthrow the established faith. In 1560 Knox drew up the Articles of the Presbyterian Church and, with the help of English troops, effected a religious revolution. In 1561 the beautiful but ill-fated Mary Stuart returned from France to her black kingdom, which was already alienated from her own Catholic views. Although she showed amazing skill and logic in her arguments with Knox, the fiery reformer carried the realm with him in his denunciation of the queen. By the time Mary



had been defeated in battle and, after fleeing to England, had been executed by Elizabeth in 1587. Scotland had been won over to Calvinistic Presbyterianism.

**Other Protestant sects.** There were other men besides Luther and Calvin who aided the Protestant revolt. Calvin was preceded in Switzerland by a scholarly and sincere leader named Ulrich Zwingli (1484-1531). Even more than Luther, Zwingli placed his faith in the authority of the Scriptures alone. At the heart of the Swiss reformer's teaching was the principle that the Lord's Supper does not contain the miracle of transubstantiation but is merely a symbolic ceremony. In 1531 trouble broke out between the Catholics and the adherents of Zwingli, and in the civil conflict which ensued Zwingli and many of his followers were slain. But he had given an initial impetus to Protestantism in Switzerland.

There were other Protestant sects. An evangelical form of Protestantism known as Anabaptism flourished for a while in parts of Germany, Bohemia, and Holland. The Anabaptists believed that adults alone should receive baptism. They also favored social reforms and were involved in the Peasants' Revolt. Some of them believed in a kind of primitive communism in which all governments would be swept away. In England Robert Browne (about 1550-1633) preached that Christians should be organized into individual democratic congregations for the purpose of following the Christian life more effectively. Thus arose Congregationalism. Meanwhile, owing to the efforts of Servetus (1511-1553) and two members of the Italian family Sozzini, the tenets of Unitarianism (in which the divinity of Christ and the reality of the Trinity were challenged) came to be spread abroad. While these various sects were never large in the number of their adherents, their effect on later religious thought was great.

**The Catholic reformation.** All the while the new movements were spreading, the Roman Catholic Church was on the defensive in the face of the growth of Lutheranism, Anglicanism, Calvinism, and the independent sects. But with the accession of Paul III to the papal throne in 1534 the ancient Church began to institute reforms, a policy which continued under the leadership of a group of earnest and able Popes. This Catholic reformation came to a peak in the Council of Trent (1545-1563).

There a clear enunciation of Catholic doctrines was set forth. In no point of dogma did the Catholic Church compromise with the Protestants. The successors of St. Thomas Aquinas, who had done so much to shape the dogmas of the medieval Church, were firm in stating that the Bible and the traditions of the Church must be accepted as the basis of Christianity and that only the Church had the right to interpret these vital elements.

As proof of the fact that the Catholic Church in no wise departed from its age-old body of beliefs, the following reaffirms the validity of the sacramental system:

"If any one saith that the sacraments of the new law were not all instituted by Jesus Christ, our Lord; or that they are more or less than seven, to wit, baptism, confirmation, the eucharist, penance, extreme unction, orders, and matrimony; or even that any one of these seven is not truly and properly a sacrament; let him be anathema."<sup>16</sup>

At the same time drastic reforms were made in Church discipline and administration. Such evils as simony, absenteeism, and secular pursuits on the part of the clergy were strictly forbidden. The Council forbade prelates and other holders of ecclesiastical offices to aid their kinsmen at the expense of the Church:

"It strictly forbids them . . . to strive to enrich their own kindred or domestics out of the revenues of the Church; seeing that even the canons of the apostles forbid them to give to their kindred the property of the Church, which belongs to God; . . . yea, this holy Council, with the utmost earnestness, admonishes them completely to lay aside all this human and carnal affection towards brothers, nephews, and kindred, which is the seed plot of many evils in the Church."<sup>17</sup>

The Vulgate, the Latin Bible, was reissued in a new edition. A list of heretical and immoral books was prepared, known as the *Index*. The Inquisition, the court which tried heresy, was given fresh life in Italy and Spain.

**The Jesuit order.** Meanwhile a Spanish ex-soldier, Ignatius Loyola (1491-1556), founded an order in 1534 which had much to do with the revival of Catholicism in the latter half of the sixteenth century. The order, known as the Company of Jesus, took in addition to the three vows of chastity, obedience, and poverty a special vow of allegiance to the Pope. It was the Jesuits' purpose, by means of preaching

and education, to win back converts to the Roman Church. They succeeded remarkably well. They recovered most of Poland, maintained Catholicism in Bavaria, the southern Netherlands (now Belgium), and Ireland, and performed excellent missionary work in North

and South America, China, and India. Owing to their efforts and to the weight always lent by tradition, Italy, Spain, and Portugal remained loyally Catholic, France saw Protestantism checked, and Ireland, Poland, and Austria remained predominantly Catholic.

### *The Revolt As Politics*

**The religious division of Europe.** Prior to 1500 there had been two religious divisions in Christendom—Greek Orthodox and Catholic (see map, page 222). Now in 1550 Christendom was composed of three divisions—Orthodox, Catholic, and Protestant. Protestantism had become uppermost in northern Europe, while Catholicism held sway in the south, as the map below shows, and in the Spanish and Portuguese possessions in the Americas and the Philippines. This great religious division had struck a mortal blow at medieval unity. The Catholics placed their faith in the infallibility of the Pope and the need of a mediatory priesthood. The Protestants placed their faith in the infallibility of the Bible and the ability of every Christian to win salvation with no mediation. The Protestants differed among themselves in their interpretation of the Bible and the methods of church organization; thus in time hundreds of Protestant sects arose, each claiming to possess the one and only true interpretation and logical administration.

The founder of the Christian religion had given as a primary command, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." But there was no brotherhood between Catholic and Protestant. After Luther's death (1546) both factions embarked upon the ghastly policy of exterminating each other.

In an age of mass illiteracy, superstition, and ignorance of events outside one's own experience, it was natural to find intolerance and bigotry in religious matters. But the wars which now broke out, while masked under a religious cloak in order to appeal to the bias of each conflicting sect, were motivated largely by concealed political schemes. Furthermore, although religious issues appeared most important at the outbreak of hostilities, as time went on, the true state of affairs—the motivating forces of political and national ambitions—became much more apparent.

**The course of politics, 1500-1648.** During the century and a half from 1500 to 1648 the

main political theme is not so much the consolidation of national states but rather the story of bitter rivalry, of statecraft, between ruling houses who now competed against each other in the international arena. Of the various competing families, the most implacable rivalry was between the French royal house and the Spanish-Austrian Hapsburgs. During much of the period Spain was the greatest single power in Europe. This was the golden age of Spanish political power as well as the height of her creativeness in art and literature. The Hapsburg-French feud was the main conflict in the European political arena, but there were also subsidiary conflicts such as the struggle of the Dutch for national independence and the duel between England and Spain.

The long period of intermittent warfare in Europe was begun by the French king and the emperor of the Holy Roman Empire in 1522 when their imperialistic ambitions clashed in Italy. The war in Italy continued until 1559. After the beginning of the war, Europe had little peace for one hundred fifty years. At least seven distinct wars followed, and each was a complex blend of religious and political



factors. These struggles of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries are usually referred to as the Religious Wars. Largely out of the welter of these conflicts the political fabric of Europe emerged in early modern times. An understanding of how this came about requires a careful survey of the following wars: the Schmalkaldic wars in Germany (1546-1555), the revolt of the Netherlands (1556-1648), the war between England and Spain (1588-1604), the French religious wars (1562-1595), the struggle against the Ottoman Turks waged intermittently through most of the sixteenth century, the Thirty Years' War (1618-1648), and the English civil wars (1642-1660).

**Europe about 1500.** We have already seen how the Anglican Church was created largely as a result of the political ambitions of the newly established Tudors. In 1485 Henry VII came to the English throne and by virtue of his personal thrift and royal policies laid the foundations of a strong English national state. Under Henry VIII England advanced in internal wealth and external power, and the Church had been brought under national control.

Nationalism was also growing in France. The Hundred Years' War, as we noted in Chapter 15, not only freed large portions of French territory from English domination; it excited in the hearts of Frenchmen a love of country. In the fifteenth century French territory was expanded, royal authority was strengthened, and a uniform coinage system and a standing army were established.

Strong at home, France by 1500 had also become interested in an aggressive foreign policy. In 1494 Charles VIII invaded the Italian plains in search of territorial booty and marched the length of Italy, thus marking a new chapter in European power politics. Francis I (1515-1547), in his desire to increase French nationalism, prestige, and territory, became embroiled in a major conflict with the most powerful monarch in Europe, Charles I of Spain, who was also the emperor Charles V of the Holy Roman Empire.

Under Ferdinand and Isabella Spanish territory was united and the foundations for an overseas empire were laid through the voyages of Columbus. In 1504 Ferdinand secured control (as a personal possession of Aragon) of Naples, Sicily, and Sardinia. Spain thereby acquired power in the Mediterranean.

Ferdinand and Isabella gradually centralized power in their own hands, at the same time winning permission from the Pope to have the Inquisition placed under royal control. The step was doubly important; it not only enabled the kings of Spain to use the dreaded weapon as a means of creating national uniformity, but it also strengthened the ties between the reigning Spanish house and the Catholic Church. Spain was to be one national state which could logically fight for the preservation of an international Church. Her alliance with the Church became very strong as a result of the dynastic history of the Spanish ruling house. Joanna, daughter of Ferdinand and Isabella, was married to Philip of Hapsburg, whose father was Maximilian I (1493-1519), archduke of Austria and emperor of the Holy Roman Empire, and whose mother was Mary of Burgundy, heiress of the Netherlands. Their son Charles eventually succeeded to the throne of Spain as Charles I and to the throne of the Holy Roman Empire as Charles V. Never had such a monarch so many possessions. His titles were multitudinous. Mexico City, Naples, Vienna, Brussels, Milan, Madrid, and many other important cities bowed to his authority.

**The Italian wars.** At this time the French king was Francis I, a high-spirited, impetuous, and glory-seeking young man, who saw in Charles V the one great obstacle to his ambitions. Francis had designs upon the Netherlands, upon Navarre, and upon Naples and Milan in Italy. Charles, on his part, controlled the first three areas, claimed overlordship of Milan, and in addition laid claim to the duchy of Burgundy that had been added to France by Louis XI. The conflict between Francis and Charles broke out in 1522 with Italy as the main area of combat. The imperial forces of Charles drove the French out of Milan and inflicted a crushing defeat upon the French. The Treaty of Cambrai signed in 1529 confirmed Hapsburg mastery in Italy. This proved to be merely an armistice, for hostilities broke out again in 1536 and continued until 1559, when the Treaty of Cateau-Cambrésis was signed by the successors of Charles and Francis. During his long struggle with Charles, Francis had made alliances with the Protestant German princes, with Scotland and Sweden, and even with the Ottoman Turks.

**The Schmalkaldic wars.** While the conflict with Francis was at its height, Charles became involved in another struggle, the first of the religious wars. As a result of the Lutheran revolt in Germany, Charles v, an ardent Catholic, sought to crush heresy and restore religious unity throughout his far-flung dominions. War began in 1546 between the Catholics and the League of Schmalkalden, formed in 1531 by Protestants in self-defense. In 1552 the conflict was ended by agreement, without Charles' accomplishing his aims, for the Peace of Augsburg in 1555 permitted either Lutheran or Catholic worship in the empire. The political provisions of the peace gave the individual princes the right to decide which faith their subjects must worship. However, the Peace of Augsburg was in reality only a truce, for the religious and political status of the German states was soon to be fought over again in the bloody Thirty Years' War.

**The French wars.** War broke out in France in 1562. Prior to that date, however, Francis I, in his struggle against Charles v, had encouraged the Lutherans in Germany to revolt, although at the same time he had persecuted the Protestant Huguenots at home. Under Henry II (1547-1559), spurred on by the powerful Catholic family of Guise, heretics were severely punished, yet the Huguenots tended to increase in numbers and power, mainly because they were led by the powerful Bourbon family, especially the king of Navarre. The domestic history of France in the latter part of the fifteenth century is largely taken up by factional rivalry between the Guise and Bourbon houses. The Bourbons traced their descent from Saint Louis, a French king of the thirteenth century, and since the reigning royal family gave signs of becoming extinct, they saw the prospect of obtaining the French crown. The Guises, descendants of the powerful duke of Lorraine and champions of Catholicism, were determined that the Protestant Bourbons should never gain control of the French monarchy. Thus a civil war was brewing, partly religious as Catholics and Huguenots reviled one another, partly political as the Guises and Bourbons plotted for royal power. In 1562 the Edict of January granted a certain tolerance of religious views, which was pleasing to the Huguenots and displeasing to the Catholics. Both sides prepared for conflict, the Huguenots enlisting aid from

England and the Catholics obtaining an army from Philip II of Spain.

The war lasted from 1562 to 1595 and was really a succession of eight bitterly fought conflicts. The most outstanding event was the massacre on St. Bartholomew's Day, 1572, when about seven thousand Protestants were slain in Paris and elsewhere throughout France. Many of the Catholic princes lamented the massacre, which may have been largely the work of Catherine de' Medici, mother of King Charles IX and virtual ruler of France.

Following the assassination of the king in civil strife, by right of succession Henry of Navarre, a Protestant, became king of France in 1589. Henry saw that the majority of the people were Catholic; so in 1593 he changed his faith, and by 1595 religious wars had ceased in France. The Edict of Nantes, issued by Henry IV in 1598, ensured freedom of worship to the Huguenots in many cities, and by granting them many other privileges, saved Protestantism in France. Hostilities with Philip dragged on until 1598 when a French victory ended Spanish intervention.

**Hapsburg rulers and problems of empire.** Charles v had to pay a heavy price for being the ruler of the vast Hapsburg empire. On every side he was beset with problems. Not only did he have to cope with rebellious Protestant nobles in Germany and with attacks from France, but his empire was menaced by Ottoman Turks, who were encroaching on the fringes of Europe. During his reign German nationalism flickered and almost burst into flame. There was some possibility that Charles, assisted by the small German landholders, the knights, might effectively curb the power of the great nobles and thus begin the creation of a German national state. This promising movement, however, barely got started when the Protestant revolt brought about a breach between the knights and the emperor. The idea of uniting Germany faded before the fierce animosities created by the Lutheran movement as Protestant nobles were pitted against their Catholic fellows. Worn out by the arduous task of ruling his many domains, Charles v abdicated in 1556, turning over his Spanish and Italian possessions to his son Philip and his Austrian lands to his younger brother Ferdinand.

The accession of Philip II to the throne of Spain brought about a new phase in Europe's



*A barber washes the hair of a customer in this Nuremberg woodcut (about 1550). Notice the tap consisting of a kettle suspended from a crane.*

religious wars, more violent, brutal, and widespread than those waged during the reigns of Francis I and Charles V. Philip II was determined to make Spain the paramount nation in Europe. In this ambition he was also supported by his uncle Ferdinand, now emperor of the Holy Roman Empire, who saw eye to eye with Philip in making the Hapsburgs dominant in European politics. Philip was a leader of militant Catholicism and resolved to use the power of mighty Spain to crush Protestantism wherever it was found. Philip II, the son of Charles V, was one of the notable figures of the last half of the sixteenth century. He ruled over a vast empire inherited from his father, Charles V. He worked indefatigably and conscientiously at his state affairs. Since he was above all a pious Catholic, his statecraft was aimed at preventing the spread of Protestantism and forcing those lands that had strayed from the fold of the papacy to return. With all of his fine qualities, Philip

was intolerant and at times indescribably cruel to his enemies. He was especially disturbed at the spread of Protestantism in the Netherlands. Philip now began a process that was not to stop until the northern provinces of the Netherlands had become an independent state called Holland. This brings us to the third great war, the struggle of the Dutch for independence.

*The revolt of the Netherlands.* The genesis of Holland may be dated from the accession of Philip II to the Spanish throne. For some time the Netherlands had been becoming more and more Protestant. Thoroughly aroused at the spread of this heresy in his domains, Philip resolved to stamp it out. His policy aroused strenuous opposition. In addition to resisting Philip's religious policy, the people of the Netherlands complained they were being taxed too heavily and that their ruler was taking away the ancient liberties of their cities. A group of the leading burghers in 1566 petitioned Philip to abolish the Inquisition and other grievances. The story goes that Philip's regent was at first quite alarmed by the petition, which warned of revolt if grievances were not redressed. But an adviser turned to the regent and said, "What . . . is your highness afraid of these beggars?" From that time on the party of resistance to Philip in the Netherlands assumed the name of Beggars.

Nothing was done to rectify the evils from which the people suffered, and in 1566 a series of violent riots took place. Philip's answer was to send his best general, the Duke of Alva, to quell the revolt. As a result the Council of Troubles, also known as the Council of Blood, was set up to stamp out disloyalty. At that critical point the Dutch were fortunate in securing the services of a great leader, William of Orange. At first the Duke of Alva was successful, and the puny forces commanded by William were dispersed again and again. But in 1569 the Dutch began to outfit privateers to prey on Spanish shipping. Much loot was captured, and from then on the patriots gained ground. The brutal tactics of Alva completely failed, and in 1573 he was recalled.

However, the struggle went on, and in 1576 the terrible event known in Dutch history as the Spanish Fury occurred. In that year the Spanish soldiery rebelled because their pay and food were not forthcoming, marched upon



*Peter Breughel made this copper engraving of skaters on the Canal of Antwerp. It is full of rough good humor (the fallen skater, the laughing onlookers, the jester in the foreground).*

Antwerp, and sacked the town with indescribable ferocity. News of the atrocity ended some of the differences that had existed in the patriotic party, and in 1576 the Pacification of Ghent was signed by all parties. This was the Dutch declaration of independence. In it the seventeen provinces of the Netherlands agreed that they would fight until the foreigner was ejected, that both Catholic and Protestant were to enjoy toleration, and that in theory the provinces would recognize the nominal overlordship of Philip. The actual head of the government, however, was to be William of Orange.

The seventeen provinces did not long continue the unity manifested in the Pacification of Ghent. The Spanish were able to create discord between the northern provinces, mainly Protestant, and those in the south, where there were many complaints against Spanish policy but none against Philip's religious policy, since the people here were Catholic. In 1579 the people of the Netherlands came to the parting

of the ways, for in the south the leaders declared in favor of reconciliation with Philip II, while the northern provinces declared that they would not rest until Spanish tyranny had been crushed and complete freedom achieved. The southern provinces remained for more than two hundred years in the hands of the Hapsburgs, first as the Spanish Netherlands and then as the Austrian Netherlands. Early in the nineteenth century the southern provinces obtained their independence and entered the family of nations as Belgium. As for the northern provinces, many weary years of fighting remained for them until Spain acknowledged their independence. By 1609 Spain was forced to cease trying to subdue the Dutch Netherlands, and in 1648 Dutch independence was formally recognized.

There are several reasons why the Dutch were able, ultimately, to foil the attempts of Philip to crush them. The existence of canals enabled the Dutch on several occasions to flood out their enemies. The Dutch proved to

be fine sailors, and their fleet of privateers seriously weakened Spanish power. William was a patient and cautious general, who refused to fight decisive battles when the Spanish armies were too strong but chose to play a waiting game that wore out his adversaries. The Dutch received much support from the friends of Protestantism, especially in England, which was now acknowledged to be the leading Protestant power.

*England's duel with Spain.* Philip saw that he must subdue Elizabeth and her subjects, thus paving the way for yet another religious war. Moreover, he had been husband of Mary Tudor when she was England's queen. Philip hoped that Catholic Mary Stuart, who had fled to England after her disastrous reign in Scotland, would become queen of England. Mary's claims to the English throne were very strong, for her grandmother had been Margaret Tudor, sister of Henry VIII. From the Catholic viewpoint, because Mary Tudor, the only legitimate daughter of Henry (being born from his marriage to Catherine), was now dead, Mary Stuart was the only proper claimant to the English throne. In 1587, however, Elizabeth had Mary Stuart beheaded for being involved in Catholic plots against the English queen. Mary bequeathed to Philip her rights to the throne. England was now confronted with one of the most dangerous situations in her long history, and many men living at that time, both in England and on the European continent, had little hope that the island kingdom could hold out against the might of Philip II.

During the first thirty years of her long reign Queen Elizabeth played a clever waiting game, keeping Philip II guessing and always dangling before him the prospect of marriage, by which the thrones of England and Spain would be merged. At the same time she was carrying on negotiations with the Spanish monarch, Elizabeth was subsidizing the Dutch in their revolt and also secretly encouraging the English pirates, such as Sir Francis Drake and Sir John Hawkins, to prey upon Spanish commerce. While Elizabeth was dallying with Spain, postponing the inevitable showdown until her people should be strong enough to meet the forces of Philip in open battle, the queen was also preoccupied in keeping France from joining forces with Spain.

In 1588 the Spanish fleet, the Armada, set sail for an attack on England. The English

people by that time were well ready for battle. Unfortunately for the Spanish monarch, his bulky galleons were outmaneuvered by the small but fast ships of Sir Francis Drake and John Hawkins, and when a severe storm destroyed most of the fleet, his well-planned campaign was a fiasco.

*The struggle against the Turks.* During the reign of Charles V the Ottoman Turks under the leadership of Suleiman the Magnificent extended their sway over the Balkans and overwhelmed Hungary. The Turkish menace was strengthened by cooperation between Suleiman and Francis I of France. Religious scruples counted for little in the battle of statecraft. During the reign of Philip II the threat from the Turks continued. They captured nearly all the islands in the Mediterranean and even threatened Italy. At this point the Pope appealed to all Christians for aid. Italian cities furnished many ships, and to these were added the galleys of Philip II. At the battle of Lepanto in 1571 a great Turkish fleet was defeated and, for the moment, the menace of the Turks removed.

Philip II died in 1598, and his passing signified the approaching end of Spain's dominance on the European continent. Despite his fanatical determination to crush Protestantism and to make Spain supreme in political affairs, failure had rewarded most of his efforts. The Dutch maintained their freedom, France finally eliminated Spanish interference, and England under Elizabeth defeated his great Armada. Only against the Turks had Philip and his allies won a notable triumph.

*The Thirty Years' War.* The most terrible of the religious wars was yet to come. This was the Thirty Years' War, in which Spain and her allies, the Austrian Hapsburgs, received a disastrous defeat. Out of the thirty years of strife a new nation took its place as the dominant European power. This was Bourbon France. The spark that ignited the new conflagration came in eastern Europe. For some time tension had been growing between Protestants and Catholics in Germany and Bohemia. In the latter country events came to a crisis. The Bohemians, preponderantly Protestant, had been denied religious toleration by Emperor Matthias (1612-1619), and in 1618 they revolted, inviting Protestant Elector Frederick V of the Palatinate, a small German province along the Rhine, to rule them. The Thirty

Years' War had begun. By 1620 Frederick and the Bohemians had been defeated and Frederick forced to flee. Protestantism was banned in Bohemia and Austria, and the Palatinate was turned over to Catholic Bavaria. Philip IV of Spain now thought that this Catholic success would give him a chance to reconquer Holland. France and England came to the rescue of the latter country but bungled matters.

Christian IV (1588-1648) of Denmark and Norway now entered the fray, not only to champion Protestantism but to gain further control over North Sea ports. However, Christian was forced to fight against the brilliant plunderer Wallenstein, whose mercenary army, composed of Protestants and Catholics alike, was primarily interested in booty. Christian was defeated, and Denmark lost certain privileges in Germany. The success of the Catholic cause now drew the leading Lutheran power, Sweden, into the fray in self-defense. The king of Sweden, Gustavus Adolphus, was brilliant in the arts of both peace and war. He determined to make Sweden the leading power in the whole Baltic area. Gustavus invaded the German states, driving the Catholics before him. In 1632 the Swedish king met Wallenstein in battle. Gustavus defeated Wallenstein, but was himself slain. Two years later Wallenstein was assassinated, and in 1635 a compromise was reached between the German emperor Ferdinand II and various Protestant princes.

But the compromise peace came to an end when Cardinal Richelieu, the French king's chief adviser, decided that French political power could be secure only when the Hapsburgs of Austria and Spain had been defeated. Up to 1635 he had been giving the German Protestants and Sweden secret aid in their struggle against the Catholics. Now he came out into the open. He knew that the Protestants in Germany would keep Austria busy while he directed his attacks against Philip IV of Spain. Slowly the former success of Spain was turned into defeat by force of French arms. Philip lost Portugal and barely kept the

southern Netherlands and his Italian possessions. Meanwhile the Hapsburg emperor was kept on the defensive by the German Protestants, particularly because they received troops from France. In 1648 the Thirty Years' War came to an end with the signing of the Peace of Westphalia.

*The Peace of Westphalia.* According to the treaties the Hapsburgs in Austria were allowed to keep their hereditary possessions, Austria, Hungary, and Bohemia, but since each prince was given the privilege of making war and peace, the emperor was stripped of much of his former power. France took Alsace, Sweden received German territory along the Baltic, Brandenburg, a rising German state, gained additional land, while Switzerland was declared independent of the Austrian Hapsburgs and Holland independent of the Spanish Hapsburgs. There were also changes of a religious nature. Calvinism was given the same privileges which had earlier been accorded the Lutherans. Protestant and Catholic judges in equal numbers occupied the imperial courts. Meanwhile the religious status of the various countries was practically the same as it had been before all the bloody wars broke out.

It is that state of affairs which leads us to say that the hundred years of butchery which followed Luther's death were the result of political rather than religious reasons. How else can we account for the extraordinary fact that Cardinal Richelieu, a high dignitary in the Catholic Church, openly carried on warfare against rulers who were ostensibly seeking to crush Protestant heresy? It may be true that Philip IV of Spain placed the needs of an international Church even before the needs of his own nation. But Richelieu completely and unequivocally reversed the situation. He used the Thirty Years' War to destroy the supremacy of the Austrian and Spanish Hapsburgs, to gain more territory for France, and to lay the foundations for the immediate supremacy of French authority and power throughout Europe under Louis XIV.

### *The English Civil Wars*

**T**he English civil wars (1642-1660) are in many respects quite different from the other religious wars. Like most of the wars on the continent, the English conflict was a

complex blend of politics and religion. But unlike the Thirty Years' War, which saw the Germanies as a battleground for conflicting ambitions of various nations, the English polit-



ical struggle was a domestic duel. And unlike the other wars, the English conflict carried with it a unique English movement, the growth of constitutional government. Indeed, although the religious implications of the English civil wars are important, they are overshadowed by the constitutional results.

In breaking with the Church of Rome, Henry VIII was in the main acting with the approval of the English people. For hundreds of years there had been strong feeling manifested in England against what was felt to be unwarranted interference in domestic affairs by the Pope. The fact that the religious revolt in England had popular support, although its prime mover was a despotic king, reflects the essential nature of Tudor rule. King Henry VII, gaining the throne after the lawless Wars of the Roses, established what might be called a popular despotism and restored law and order. In order to secure speedy results, Henry VII made his Parliaments subservient to his wishes and created a machinery of despotism which hunted down and imprisoned any malefactor who opposed the king's will. Tudor strong government, whether in the hands of Henry VII or his granddaughter Elizabeth, was accepted by the English people.

From 1485 to 1603, therefore, the forward march of English constitutional progress was halted. After the defeat of the Armada in 1588, however, a new spirit began to manifest itself in England. After more than a century of benevolent despotism, the English people were ready to resume the development of representative government.

**James I and Parliament.** Elizabeth's successor in 1603 was James Stuart, king of Scotland, son of the deceased queen, who was imported from Edinburgh to reside in London. Scotland and England, though not united, now had a common king. It was of supreme importance that James I appreciate the temper of his new subjects. But this the new monarch did not do. From the outset of his reign he made it plain that he meant to be a despot. James, who was dubbed "the wisest fool in Christendom" because of his immense book-learning and his lack of common sense, fanatically believed in the divine right of kings. He continually irritated his subjects by references to his kingly prerogatives and infuriated Parliament by bluntly informing its members to mind their own business.

**The religious issue.** As the constitutional issue of king against Parliament crystallized, it was complicated by religion. We remember that the religious changes brought about by Henry VIII were not basically a doctrinal revolt. Henry became head of the English Church, and independence from Rome was declared, but much of the old theology and ceremony was retained. During the reign of Edward VI and Queen Elizabeth there was a decided trend toward Protestant changes in doctrine and ceremony. When James came to the throne, some Englishmen were content with the Church as it then stood; some, while not actually wishing to go back under the rule of the Pope, did wish to reintroduce much of the old ceremony and some of the tenets of the old Church; and some took an extreme Protestant position. These last-named persons were the Puritans.

Economics, religion, and politics became entangled in England in a great civil conflict. The ranks of the Puritans were made up largely of men engaged in trade and commerce, the middle class living in the cities. These businessmen resented very much the growing tendency of James to resort to illegal and arbitrary taxation. The middle class was interested in controlling government in order to avoid useless and expensive wars and to secure laws to protect and expand the commercial interests of the nation. In their ranks also were the lawyers, who supplied the middle class with historical precedents as ammunition against the growing absolutism of the Stuarts.

**James's policy and its effects.** James's arbitrary taxation, his evident interest in the High Church movement, and his love of royal prerogatives introduced the first steps leading to civil war. James quarreled with Parliament over taxation and bluntly told them to mind their own business and not discuss church matters. This led the House of Commons to draw up and pass what it called an *Apology* but which was in reality a statement of its parliamentary rights. The House especially claimed the right "that in parliament they may speak freely their consciences without check and controlment." From 1611 to 1621, James ruled the country practically without Parliament.

In the latter part of King James's reign England was confronted by the Thirty Years' War. The English people sided with the German Protestants and were quite willing to enter the

struggle. James, however, was not only pacifistic but pro-Spanish as well. It was his ambition to marry his son Charles to one of the daughters of the king of Spain. This enabled the Spanish ambassador at London to twist James in any direction he wished. James's foreign policy infuriated the Puritans, to whom Catholic Spain was anathema.

**Charles I and Parliament.** At the death of James I in 1625 the English throne was inherited by his son, Charles I. The mistakes of the father were repeated by the son, to an even greater degree. Charles was well-meaning and his private life pure, but he too insisted on absolute royal power. The new reign began with stormy debate between king and Parliament. Three years later, in order to obtain revenue from Parliament, the king agreed to the famous Petition of Right. This parliamentary declaration ranks in importance with *Magna Charta* and the Bill of Rights (1689) as one of the great documents in the development of representative government. Its most important provisions denied the right of the king to tax without parliamentary consent or to imprison a freeman without cause.

Little immediate good came of this petition, however, for Charles soon broke its provisions and ruled England from 1629 to 1640 without calling Parliament. During this period the king resorted to illegal methods of taxation. He supported the High Church party and punished those, mainly Puritans, who refused to fall in line with his religious beliefs. Several outstanding Puritan leaders of the House of Commons were imprisoned for their political views. The king's illegal impositions fell heavily upon the shoulders of the wealthy people, often Puritan merchants and shopkeepers.

Charles's personal rule was terminated in 1640. When he attempted to force his brand of religion on the Scots, they promptly invaded England. Faced by a hostile army and without sufficient funds to put an army of his own into the field, Charles was forced to convene Parliament. This body, the famous "Long Parliament," sensing the weakness in the king's position, immediately set to work to make the powers of Parliament at least co-equal with the monarchy.

These reforms represented a great victory for Parliament. But trouble arose over the question of religion. Few wanted a High

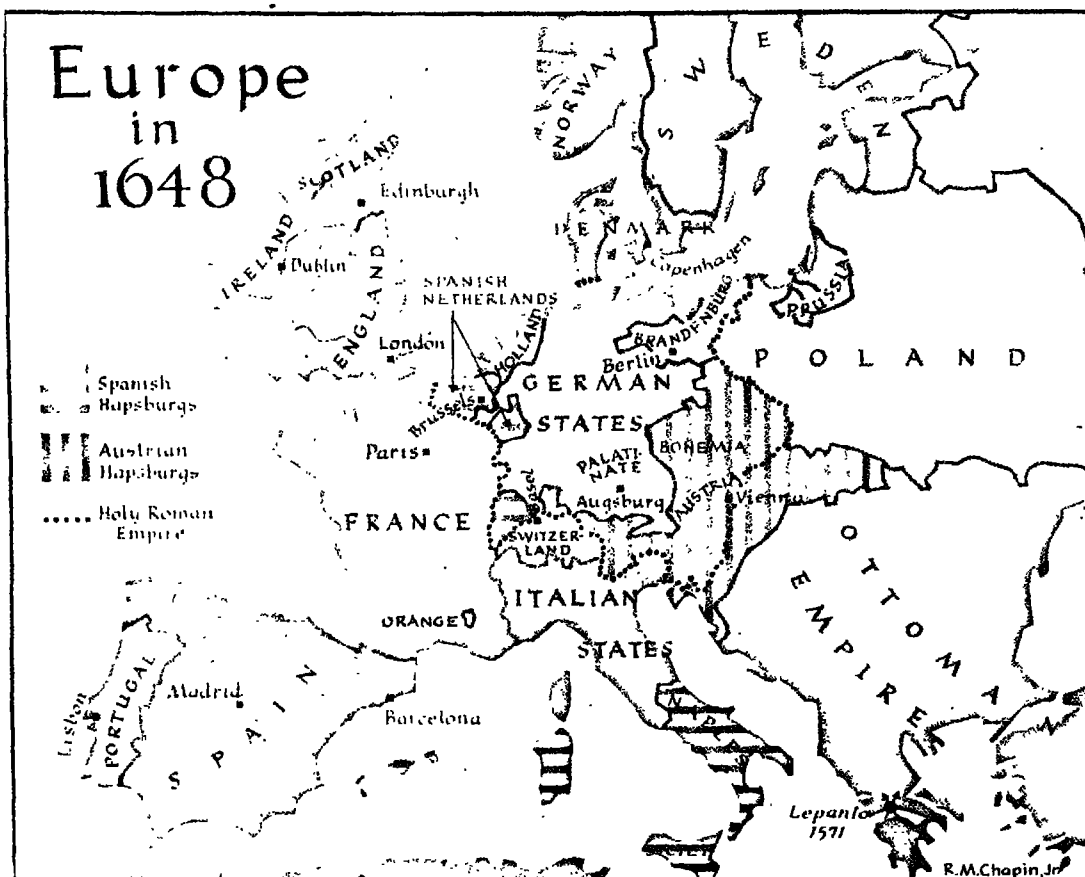
Church system, but there was no unanimity as to what form of Protestantism should take its place. Out of this stalemate there quickly developed two bitterly antagonistic parties. The parliamentary, or "Roundhead," faction, composed of the Puritans, held generally to a Calvinistic system of religion and demanded even further reduction in the political prerogatives of the king. The Royalist party was supported by the Cavaliers, the landowning gentry, who abhorred extreme Protestantism and, although one with the Puritans in opposing royal despotism, were unwilling to see the monarchy stripped of all its powers.

**The war.** Civil war broke out in 1642. In the end, control of the sea and possession of greater economic resources enabled the Roundheads to defeat the king's armies. The fighting came to an end in 1646. For two years there was an interlude, in which Charles tried to play his enemies—the politicians in Parliament, the Scots, and the Puritan army—one against the other. The upshot was the rise of fierce resentment against the king in the ranks of the Puritan army, and in 1648 a second civil war broke out. The allies of the king were defeated, and in December, 1648, all non-Puritan members of the House of Commons were excluded from that body by the victorious Puritan army. Following a brief trial, King Charles was executed in January, 1649.

**The Commonwealth and Cromwell.** The next month the House of Commons abolished the House of Lords and declared the office of king unnecessary. In May, 1649, England was proclaimed a Commonwealth. The new government has been called the first national republic in modern times. Its main figure was Oliver Cromwell (1599-1658), whose military genius had been largely responsible for the defeat of the king's cavalier armies. Cromwell had drilled the parliamentary forces into crack regiments of God-fearing soldiers who fought as well as they prayed.

In 1653 the Puritan army forced the overthrow of the Commonwealth and set up a new form of government based on a written constitution called *The Instrument of Government*, the first written constitution in modern times. Cromwell became the Lord Protector for life, assisted by a council and Parliament.

Now virtual dictator of England, Cromwell endeavored to achieve a religious settlement for the nation and favored a rather tolerant



religious system. But it was impossible to satisfy radical Puritanism, Presbyterianism, the High Church party, and other religious factions of varying shades and hues. The last three years of Cromwell's life were filled with disappointment and trouble. Although he did not favor it, his fanatical Puritan colleagues foisted on a pleasure-loving folk a series of hateful prohibitions which closed the theaters, muzzled the press, and stamped out most of the wholesome amusements of the people.

**The restoration.** Amid this turbulence Cromwell died in 1658 and was succeeded by Richard Cromwell, his son. A man of blameless character and high ideals but without any qualities of leadership, Richard found it impossible to carry on his father's work and resigned in less than a year (1659). The restoration of the monarchy seemed the only solution to most men. Arrangements were made for the late king's son, Charles, to return to England to become Charles II. In 1660, amid wild ex-

citement and enthusiasm, the exiled Stuart returned to London as the legal king.

It seemed as if the Puritan revolution had been for naught. The English people, unable to rule themselves, had been forced to bring back kingship. But behind the excitement and pomp of the king's return certain subtle forces had been set to work which in a few generations would result in the attainment of those political liberties for which Cromwell and his army struggled so hard.

**Europe after the wars.** As a result of the religious wars, nationalism was strongly stimulated in the Netherlands. Holland was a political child of the Reformation. England entered the period of the Reformation as a strong national state. The religious revolt strengthened her nationalism, for she fought for her very existence against the mighty power of Philip II and won a notable triumph when the Armada was destroyed. Politically the sixteenth century was dominated by Charles V

and his son Philip II. The latter employed the vast resources of Spain in trying to check the progress of the Protestant revolt, but the final result was failure. If the Protestant revolt started England and France on the path to national greatness, it hastened decline in Spain.

European events by 1648 were motivated by politics, not religion. Catholics in England joined Protestants in repelling Philip's Armada, and Catholics of France joined Protestants of Sweden, Holland, and Germany in the dynastic struggles of Bourbons and Hapsburgs. Out of this warfare the modern state system of Europe appeared. In 1648 England was in the throes of civil war. Nevertheless, she was becoming a strong national state, largely because of the achievements of the Tudor dynasty of kings reigning from 1585 to 1603.

France in 1648 was also a strong national state, headed by an absolute monarch whose power became even greater during the next half century. Denmark and Sweden emerged as stable national monarchies, the latter kingdom being especially powerful in the Baltic. The Hapsburgs made Austria strong nationally but lost much of their former control over

Germany. Spain was a national state, but its power was expended during the religious wars, and the kingdom was fast becoming a second-rate power.

Germany, the battleground of the religious wars, suffered most of all. Like Italy it was completely disunified, being segregated into innumerable petty states, among them Brandenburg (later Prussia), and therefore prey for such powerful plunderers as Sweden and France. Germany was a shambles.

"About two thirds of the total population had disappeared; the misery of those that survived was piteous in the extreme. Five sixths of the villages in the empire had been destroyed. We read of one in the Palatinate that in two years had been plundered eight times. In Saxony packs of wolves roamed about, for in the north quite one third of the land had gone out of cultivation, and trade had drifted into the hands of the French or Dutch. Education had almost disappeared; and the moral decline of the people was seen in the coarsening of manners and the growth of superstition, as witnessed by frequent burnings of witches."<sup>18</sup>

### *Summary*

In the second half of the sixteenth century the religious revolt became more and more a political movement. Seven wars, each tinged with political as well as religious aspects, raged from the middle of the sixteenth to the middle of the following century. Charles first tried to crush Protestantism in the Schmalkaldic Wars in Germany. Following the accession of Philip II the religious wars became more violent and widespread. The Dutch fought for their independence against Spain; the French Catholics and Protestants battled among themselves with Philip urging them on; Christians fought Turks in the Mediterranean; and the English successfully defied Spanish sea power under Elizabeth. Finally, in the Thirty Years' War most of Europe became engaged in brutal conflict. Starting as a quarrel between Catholics and Protestants, the struggle soon became a contest to determine what nation should become the dominant power in Europe. The result of the struggle was the decline of Spain, the enhancement of French power, and terrible devastation in Germany.

In the English civil war religion and politics were similarly dovetailed. But this struggle was mainly a domestic affair and had little to do with international politics. Our survey of English affairs in the first half of the seventeenth century showed how absolutism was overthrown and how a Puritan Republic was established under Oliver Cromwell. After about one decade without monarchy England went back to her kings, but the cause of political freedom, of representative government, was not thereby destroyed.

## EXPLORATION: 1000-1650

### To the Ends of the Earth

c. 982	Eric the Red discovers Greenland	
1200-1400	Europe increases contact with the Far East	Culture contact between Europe and Near East
1394-1460	Exploration furthered during life of Prince Henry the Navigator	Compass and astrolabe in general use; advance of cartography
1486	Diaz reaches Cape of Good Hope	
1492	Columbus reaches America	
1497-1499	Vasco da Gama sails to India	
1500-1700	Creation of overseas empires by Portugal, Spain, Holland, England, and France	
1519-1522	Magellan's expedition sails around world	
1519-1533	<i>Conquistadores</i> conquer Aztec and Inca empires	
1534-1541	Cartier leads expedition to Canada for France	
1577-1580	Drake circumnavigates globe	
1607	First English settlement in New World	

### Old Civilizations in the New World

	Pueblo Culture: most highly developed in North America	
980-1200	Renaissance of Mayan civilization	Advanced in art and science
c. 1000-1500	Inca empire in Peru	Built huge stone structures; remarkable irrigation system; creation of great empire under one ruler
15th century	Aztecs dominant people in Mexico	Culture comparable to the highest civilizations found in the Nile, Mesopotamian, and Indus valleys

### Mogul Empire in India

1494	Babur becomes king of a principality in Turkestan	
1526	Babur, through conquest, makes himself sultan of Hindustan	
1576	Akbar controls all northern India	Noted for remarkable governmental administration and complete religious tolerance
1627-1666	Rule of Shah Jahan	Pearl Mosque, Taj Mahal erected

1368-1839

### Advent of Modern China

1368	Ming dynasty established	Code of the Great Ming compiled
Latter half of 16th century	Japan makes an unsuccessful attempt to conquer China	<i>Great Encyclopedia</i> compiled
c. 1516-1600	Important foreign contacts established in China	
1516	First Portuguese ship arrives at Canton	
1557	Portuguese granted right to trade at Macao	
1644	Manchu dynasty established	

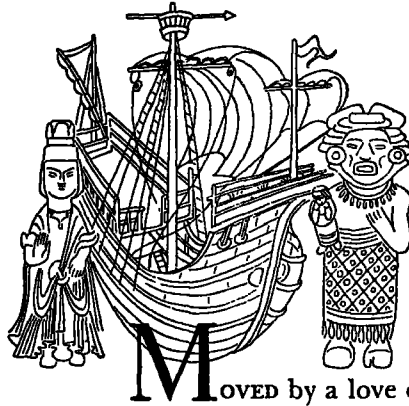
1542-1639

### Japan's Voluntary Semi-Isolation

1392-1568	Ashikaga period of Japan	No plays developed
1541	Francis Xavier, Jesuit leader, converts many inhabitants	
c. 1542	Portuguese sailors reach Japan	
1614	Edict passed prohibiting Christianity and ordering the deportation of all foreign teachers	

## CHAPTER 18

# *To the Ends of the Earth*



**M**OVED by a love of adventure, of braving the unknown and its lurking danger, and of seeking fame and fortune, hardy souls have pitted their strength against their environment, until in the twentieth century they have set foot on every continent and traversed the seas from pole to pole. The same motives prompted ancient Chinese traders to brave the wastes of the Gobi Desert, Phoenician sailors to skirt the north coast of Africa and venture beyond the Pillars of Hercules out into the unmapped depths of the ocean beyond, Viking privateers to pick their way gingerly among the ice floes of the north until they had reached North America, and Moham-medan pilgrims to penetrate the arid interior of Arabia. And, as we are about to discover, a stout heart and a burning desire to explore the unknown and discover new lands for the sake of "gospel, gold, and glory" made possible the exploits of Columbus, da Gama, Magellan, and a host of lesser luminaries. While we are reading about some of these epoch-making journeys, let us not forget the dangers which the mariners had to face daily.

They were plunging into uncharted seas whose vastness they generally knew nothing about and whose winds, currents, and shoals they had to discover by bitter experience. The vessels in which the explorers had to place their trust were unbelievably small and fragile. Whereas some of our modern liners are 80,000 tons, the two vessels which Vasco da Gama used in his voyage to India were each 120 tons, the three ships of Columbus' first voyage were one hundred, fifty, and forty tons, respectively, and the *Squirrel*, one of two ships used to found the first colony in Newfoundland, was only ten tons. Such a ship as the *Squirrel* could not have been much larger than a good-sized modern lifeboat, yet it crossed the Atlantic. These vessels had to carry as large crews as possible, because skir-

mishes with enemy ships and hostile natives depleted the ranks, while the dreaded disease, scurvy, caused by a lack of fresh vegetables and the continued use of salt meat, often carried off half the crew. We can scarcely imagine the ignorance and superstition rampant in those centuries. The tales of travelers were replete with descriptions of strange and awful birds like the roc (which could fly away holding an elephant), mammoth sea serpents that lay in wait to devour ships, treacherous whirlpools that sucked down vessels, and great waterspouts that blew them skyward. The average sailor believed with the Hellenistic scientist Ptolemy that nobody could pass through the torrid zone and return alive, and was firmly convinced that if one sailed far enough he would come to the edge of the flat earth and even plunge over its side.

With this background in mind we should be able to obtain a clearer perspective of the daring spirit with which the Renaissance explorations were accomplished. Few leaders of such expeditions were altruistic and saintly. They were often avaricious, cruel, and unscrupulous, and the pain and degradation which they inflicted upon the peoples with whom they came in contact fill some of the darkest pages of history. But they were fearless and resourceful, and these qualities enabled them—a mere handful of Europeans—to conquer and colonize North, South, and Central America and later Australia and New Zealand, and to obtain rich concessions in Africa and Asia. It is due most of all to the deeds of the men whom we shall meet in this chapter that the civilization of western Europe became, and has remained, the dominating influence in world culture.

### *Geographical Discoveries*

**L**imitations of classical knowledge. The farther one went from the Mediterranean basin, the less accurate the data became. Western Europe, the eastern Mediterranean countries, north Africa, the Red Sea region, Persia, and that part of central Asia reaching to western India were fairly well known in classical times, but the rest of the world stretched north, south, east, and west into uncharted and mysterious regions concerning which there existed the most extraordinary legends. To explain the lands and seas about which no accurate data was known was the self-assigned job of the most influential of all classical geographers, Ptolemy.

**Ptolemy (about 130 A.D.).** Having to rely for much of his information upon sailors' tales, legends, and hearsay remarks, Ptolemy constructed a map of the world that was in many respects fantastic. Yet two mistakes which he made proved of great value to later generations of explorers. He constructed his map according to a system of latitude and longitude, but as his calculations were inaccurate, he made the degree too long. Further-

more, his circumference of the world was 5000 miles short. The result was that he exaggerated the length and especially the width of the known inhabited world, so that the interval between western Europe and eastern Asia looked very much smaller than it really is. Because men of the fifteenth century accepted Ptolemy as the chief geographical authority, Columbus accepted his calculations concerning the distance which would have to be traversed and so was encouraged to sail west from Spain in search of the Asiatic coast. Had Columbus known the exact distance between Europe and Asia, he would unquestionably never have attempted the almost impossible journey.

Another important error of Ptolemy's map was the inclusion of a strip of land which extended from Africa to Asia, making the Indian Ocean an inland sea. Explorers were encouraged by Ptolemy's map to search the southern seas for the fictitious territory, known as "terra australis incognita." Finally explorers stumbled upon Australia; so Ptolemy's wrong guess was in a sense actually confirmed.

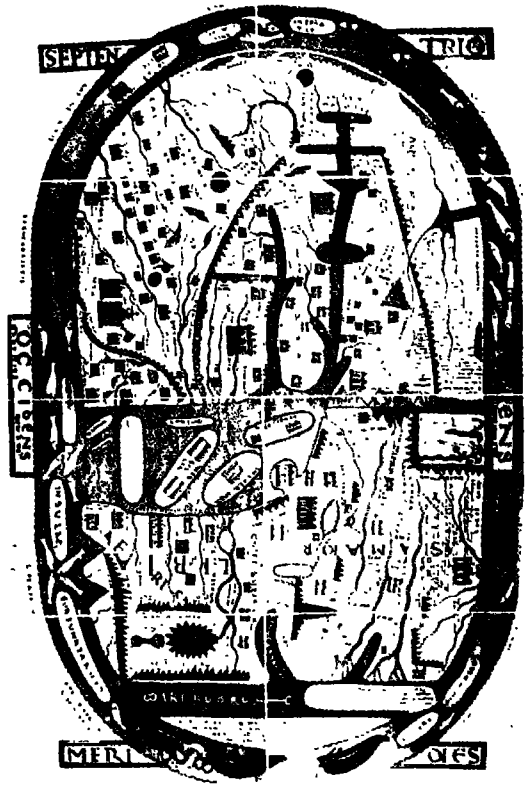
However, Ptolemy made other serious errors which hindered the progress of exploration for more than a thousand years. One of them was his belief that the habitable world of the north temperate zone was separated from the south temperate zone by a middle zone of heat so deadly that it was impossible to cross from the north to the south.

**Medieval geography.** During the Middle Ages geography became a handmaiden of theology in the hands of devout cartographers. In *Christian Topography*, written about 547 by Cosmas the Alexandrian traveler, the earth was made flat, with Jerusalem in the center, paradise in the east, and the Pillars of Hercules in the west. St. Beatus' eighth-century map follows a similar pattern. Such early medieval maps were documents of curiosity rather than fact, with lands drawn in which no man had ever seen, fabulous monsters depicted in choice localities, and the blanks filled in with elephants for towns. However, during the later Middle Ages books on astronomy taught that the earth was a sphere, and "sufficient records remain to reveal the middle of the fourteenth century to us as an age of globetrotters and world-wide adventurers."

**Norse discoveries.** Somewhere around 982 the son of a Norwegian noble by the name of Eric the Red, banished from Iceland, sailed west and discovered Greenland. Four years later settlers arrived and two towns were established. A colony existed in Greenland until the fifteenth century.

In 1002 Leif, the son of Eric the Red, voyaged to America. He probably arrived first at Labrador, then journeyed southward, where he saw land containing trees, wild grain, and grapevines, a region either in Nova Scotia or New England. Leif called the country Vineland. Other voyages were made by the Norse, who sailed Arctic waters in open boats with neither chart nor compass five hundred years before Columbus dared the crossing in warmer waters. But monumental though these voyages were, they apparently added little or nothing to the geographical knowledge of contemporary Europeans.

**Medieval travelers.** In the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries a number of Europeans, many of them Christian missionaries, journeyed to the Far East. The most famous of the travelers was Marco Polo. But the exploits of the fourteenth century had little perma-



*St. Beatus drew this map depicting a flat world in a Spanish monastery in the eighth century. Judea and a paradise for Adam and Eve occupy the center. Discernible are the Mediterranean, Europe, Africa, and Asia Minor.*

nent effect because of certain political changes that came in the last decades of that century. The Mongol dynasty in China, which had been friendly to European missionaries and merchants, was overthrown, and the succeeding Mings proved anti-foreign. Meanwhile the Turks with their fanatical Mohammedanism had overrun western Asia. These two developments put an end to further European penetration into the orient. Travel was stopped, but trade continued at certain terminals which the Moslems controlled.

**Far Eastern trade routes.** There were three major routes by which the rich commerce flowed from the Far East to Europe (see map, page 282). The northern one cut across central Asia to the Caspian and Black seas, the middle route passed through the Persian Gulf and up the Euphrates valley to termini in



Syria and the Black Sea coast, and the southern route struck up the Red Sea and over to the Nile and northern Egypt. The commerce which flowed through these routes was rich indeed, especially after the impetus given it by the crusades.

**The search for new routes.** During the fifteenth century, however, certain European nations were seeking new routes to the east. One reason lay in the numerous difficulties which commerce had to undergo on its long and dangerous journey from the orient to Europe, together with the payment of many heavy tolls and duties en route. But an even more important reason is to be found in conditions in Europe itself. The Mediterranean carrying trade was in the hands of the Italian city-states, who thus wielded a complete and rich monopoly. Hence the merchants of northern and western Europe were garnering but little of the huge profits of the expanding trade with the east. High prices and low profits were scarcely palatable to the merchants and rulers of the countries along the Atlantic seaboard, and they determined to do something about the matter.

Furthermore, they were in a position to do something. We will recall that because of Ptolemy's mistaken views on the distance between Europe and Asia many mariners believed firmly that contact could be made directly between the two continents by sailing westward. Still other sailors were of the opinion that if Africa could be circumnavigated, a route lay east to India and Cathay. Fifteenth-century political conditions also favored the Atlantic seaboard countries. Southeastern Europe was being harried by the Turks, while the Italian city-states were weakening each other by bitter commercial quarrels. But the situation on the Iberian peninsula had a positive aspect. The Moors were being driven slowly but surely out of Spain, while the zealous Spaniards were eager to expand their territory to the south. Meanwhile Portugal, being poor in land and resources, was anxious to explore the Atlantic to the south in order to gain more territory and wage war against the infidel.

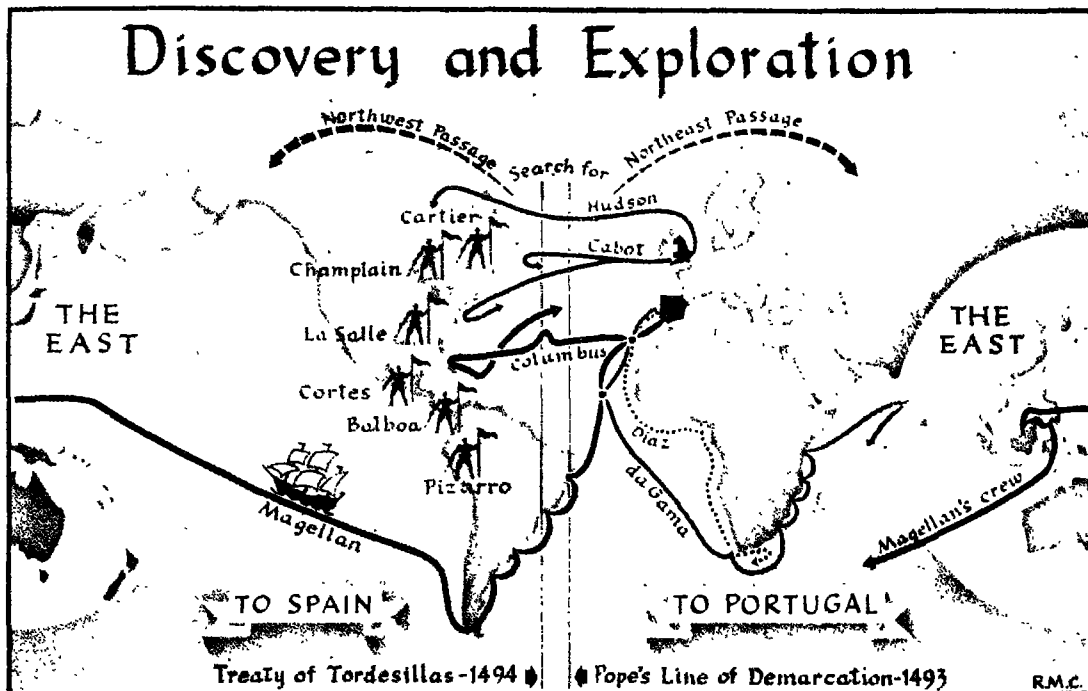
**Prince Henry the Navigator.** The real driving force behind the new and brilliant Portuguese achievements in exploration and discovery was Prince Henry, known in history as Henry the Navigator. Born in 1394, the third son of King John of Portugal, Prince

Henry the Navigator devoted his life to scientific exploration and the extension of Portugal's empire and commerce. For over forty years Henry pored over maps and sent forth expedition after expedition to unravel the secrets of the coastline of Africa. Prince Henry gathered about him skilled cartographers and navigators to construct accurate maps and eradicate errors, so that his sailors were the best equipped mariners of their time. He took pains to create the finest vessel for long voyages, and thus the caravel, which contemporaries called the best sailing ship afloat, was developed.

It was much easier now to send ships off great distances with a fair hope that they would return safely. As early as the twelfth century a crude form of the compass was in use, a magnetic needle floating on a straw in water. This device, employed in China as early as the first century, had been improved by the fourteenth century so that it was now a needle which pivoted on a card showing the points of the compass. During the fifteenth century another great aid to navigation came into general use—the astrolabe, a graduated brass circle by which the altitude of stars could be estimated and latitudes more accurately measured.

**The African voyages.** Henry's mariners did not fail him, although he died before any of the numerous expeditions he sent forth had explored the length of Africa. However, in 1486 Bartholomew Diaz succeeded in rounding the Cape of Good Hope. Diaz noticed that the African coast now swung to the northeast, but he was forced to turn back at the insistence of his disgruntled crew, and once more rounding the great cape, which he named *Cabo Tormentoso*, or Cape of Storms, he sailed back to Lisbon. Pleased with the prospect of soon finding a direct sea route to India, King John II of Portugal renamed the Cape of Storms with the less forbidding title Good Hope.

**Vasco da Gama (1469?-1524).** The final stage in the African voyages was reached by Vasco da Gama. He commanded the African expedition of 1497, on which he proved himself a splendid navigator and a firm leader of men. His resourcefulness was demonstrated after his four ships had arrived at the Cape Verde Islands. Instead of hugging the coastline as his predecessors had done, da Gama struck



bravely out into the Atlantic and sailed for ninety-three days in a direct course toward the Cape of Good Hope. Rounding the Cape, he pushed northward into Arab waters. Finally he procured an Arab pilot who brought him, after a sail of twenty-three days across the Indian Ocean, to the west coast of India. It is amusing to read that the Portuguese mistook the Hindus for Christians (because they were not Mohammedans) and even reverently attended a service. "They were, however, somewhat amazed that the figures painted on the walls, which they assumed to be those of saints, had teeth protruding an inch from their mouths and possessed four or five arms."<sup>1</sup>

The Portuguese incurred the enmity of the Arabs, whose Indian trading monopoly they had thus broken, and difficulties were put in the way of the Europeans' home voyage. Not until July of 1499 did da Gama drop anchor at Lisbon, after having lost half his ships and two thirds of his men through scurvy and other misfortunes. But the cargo which da Gama brought home was worth sixty times the cost of the expedition, and da Gama was rewarded fittingly, for the King of Portugal could now assume the mighty title "Lord of the Conquest, Navigation, and Commerce of Ethiopia, Arabia, Persia, and China."

**Columbus (1446?-1506).** Meanwhile another Atlantic power had not been idle. The Spaniards, proud of their powerful new state, were anxious to enjoy the riches and prestige of a colonial empire. Their ambition was realized mainly through the exploits of an Italian sailor called Christopher Columbus.

Columbus' expedition left Spain in August 1492. Proceeding westward into uncharted waters, Columbus sailed thirty-three days before land was sighted. At length he set foot on a small island in the West Indies. After traveling for three months among the islands, he sailed home, arriving at Spain in March 1493.

Although he made three other voyages to the New World in a vain attempt to find a direct opening to the mainland of Asia, Columbus by his first voyage had already revolutionized history, though he did not know it. A new world had been discovered, the old geographical views concerning the earth and its size had been shattered, and Europe was soon to colonize and fight over the new lands. The voyage had immediate repercussions. The monopoly of Portugal on discovery was broken, and some sort of compromise had to be worked out regarding the respective geographical spheres of both the Portuguese and

the Spanish. By a papal bull issued in 1493 a line of demarcation was drawn on the map (see page 495). All lands lying to the west of this meridian belonged to Spain, while all new discoveries made to the east were to become the rightful property of Portugal. But the latter country felt that the Pope's arrangement would keep its operations too close to the African coast. Consequently the Treaty of Tordesillas with Spain a year later set the line of demarcation farther west. This arrangement later allowed Portugal to claim Brazil because of Cabral's accidental voyage to South America, as we shall see.

**Cabral's voyage to Brazil.** We now come to a breath-taking epoch of discovery. Within eighteen years after Columbus died in 1506, the general configuration of the New World had been revealed, the most southern point of South America had been rounded, and the vast expanse of the Pacific Ocean traversed. Let us review some of the outstanding explorers and their deeds.

In 1500 a Portuguese commander named Cabral, sailing around Africa to the Indies, was blown far off his course. He sighted land in South America. This territory was acquired for Portugal, and that is why today the people of Brazil speak the Portuguese language.

**Balboa.** Explorers kept looking for a passage through the new lands which would lead them to Asia, voyaging along the coasts of Central America and the northern portion of South America. A settlement was made on the isthmus of Darien, and here a youthful Spaniard, Vasco Núñez de Balboa, heard tales from the Indians of a great ocean but a short distance to the west. In 1513 Balboa with a handful of soldiers set eyes upon the Pacific Ocean—and Europe was ready to explore a new realm of conquest.

**Magellan (1480?-1521).** In 1519 a Portuguese navigator in the service of Spain found the passage that led into the Pacific. He was Ferdinand Magellan, whose remarkable achievements entitle him to equal rank with Columbus and Vasco da Gama. Columbus made Europe acquainted with the New World; da Gama showed the way to the Far East; Magellan now linked the two areas by circumnavigating the world. He had for some time believed that it was possible to sail around South America just as Díaz had rounded Africa. The Spanish king fitted him out with a fleet of five small

ships which were "very old and patched up" and ordered Magellan to make straightway for the Spice Islands.

We have an excellent account of the voyage, thanks to the Italian Antonio Pigafetta, who accompanied Magellan and kept a diary. Toward the end of August 1520, Magellan made his memorable discovery of the strait which bears his name. Between huge ice-clad mountains and through tortuous passages the small ships made their way, taking thirty-eight days to journey 320 miles. Finally they sailed out upon the western ocean, which looked so calm after the stormy voyage that Magellan termed it Pacific. After hugging the coast northward for some time, Magellan set his course northwestward and crossed the unknown expanse of the Pacific.

**Pigafetta's account.** The hardships that Magellan and his men had to suffer have been vividly portrayed for us by Pigafetta:

"We were three months and twenty days without getting any kind of fresh food. We ate biscuit, which was no longer biscuit, but powder of biscuits swarming with worms, for they had eaten the food. It stank strongly of the urine of rats. We drank yellow water that had been putrid for many days. We also ate some ox hides that covered the top of the main yard to prevent the yard from chafing the shrouds, and which had become exceedingly hard because of the sun, rain, and wind. We left them in the sea for four or five days and then placed them for a few moments on top of the embers, and so ate them; and often we ate sawdust from boards. Rats were sold for one-half ducado apiece, and even then we could not get them. But above all the other misfortunes the following was the worst: The gums of both the lower and upper teeth of some of our men swelled, so that they could not eat under any circumstances and therefore died. . . . We sailed about four thousand leagues during those three months and twenty days through an open stretch in that Pacific Sea. In truth it was very pacific, for during that time we did not suffer any storm. . . . Had not God and His blessed Mother given us so good weather, we would all have died of hunger in that exceeding vast sea. Of a verity I believe no such voyage will ever be made [again]."<sup>2</sup>

**The end of the voyage.** In March 1521, Magellan came to islands that he mistook for

the Spice Islands, which were in reality the Philippines. At one of these islands the intrepid explorer was slain during a skirmish with natives. After numerous adventures his crew in a single vessel, the *Victoria*, crossed the Indian Ocean, rounded the Cape of Good Hope, and dropped anchor in a Spanish harbor in September 1522. Practically three years to the day had been required to circumnavigate the globe.

**Cortes in Mexico.** Meanwhile the Spaniards were making valuable land discoveries in the interior of the New World. In 1519, the year Magellan set forth, a youthful adventurer by the name of Hernando Cortes (1485-1547) led an expedition to Mexico, whence had come rumors of great riches and a high native civilization. Montezuma, ruler of the native Aztecs, had thousands of warriors, while Cortes had a mere handful. But the Spaniards possessed horses, iron armor, and gunpowder, all unknown to the Aztecs. Two other factors aided the Europeans—the discontent of many native tribes, who chafed under the stern rule of the Aztecs and who were willing to join Cortes, and an ancient legend in Mexico that the Aztecs would one day be visited and destroyed by strange, white-skinned gods.

The superstitious Montezuma sent many embassies bearing rich gifts to Cortes with the order to leave the country. A helmet was brought filled with gold dust to the brim. But such lavish gifts had the opposite effect, for instead of persuading the Spaniards to depart, they excited the gold-mad adventurers to push on to Tenochtitlan, the Aztec capital city. After various exploits, Cortes eventually captured Tenochtitlan in 1521. With this defeat the Aztecs soon lost their entire empire to the Spanish conqueror, or *conquistador*, and it was not long before the Spanish had explored most of Central America and California.

**Pizarro in Peru.** Other *conquistadores* now emulated the success of Cortes. Tales had come to Darien that a mighty empire lay to the south, of such boundless riches that a cattle raiser by the name of Francisco Pizarro (1471?-1541) decided to explore and conquer the fabulous kingdom of Peru.

The civilization which Pizarro was searching for was that of the Incas, the most advanced people in the western world, whose far-flung empire stretched along the western



*Cortes, in western armor and apparently aided by other Indian tribes, does battle with the Aztecs in this illustration from a contemporary manuscript.*

coast (see map, page 502). Pizarro managed to meet the emperor, whom he treacherously seized. To win his freedom the emperor promised to pay the following ransom: He would have a room twenty-two feet long and seventeen feet wide filled halfway up the walls with jars and other objects of gold and also have it filled twice over with silver. One may expect that the impoverished Pizarro and his men accepted the offer. Magnificent golden treasures of art poured in from the empire, such as "fountains designed to emit sparkling jets of gold," and golden trees, plants, animals, birds, and fruits. But the Christians were not art connoisseurs, with the result that the priceless treasures were all melted down into simple but solid bullion.

Despite the ransom the Spanish did not release the emperor but on trumped-up accusations sentenced him to be burned to death. However, because the ruler turned Christian, he was merely strangled to death. In 1533 Pizarro entered the Inca capital, where he reaped further treasure. Later he built a new city, Lima, the "City of Kings." It took many years to subjugate the infuriated Incas elsewhere, but eventually most of South America (with the exception of Brazil) passed into Spanish control.

**Spaniards in North America.** Meanwhile the Spanish had not been inactive in exploring North America. During the sixteenth century various intrepid Spanish explorers opened up

the interior, thereby giving Spain the right to claim a huge area in North America, stretching from Florida to California.

**English exploration.** While Portuguese and Spaniards were making discoveries and establishing empires, other European powers had not been idle. France, England, and Holland were embarking upon significant geographical schemes. Naturally the division of the overseas world between Spain and Portugal as set forth by the Bull of Demarcation of 1493 and the treaty of 1494 was scarcely calculated to arouse enthusiasm among other European powers, and it was not long before France and England encroached on the private preserves of both Portugal and Spain.

In 1497 an Italian mariner in the employ of England, John Cabot by name, sailed across the north Atlantic in a small ship manned by only eighteen men. Although close-fisted Henry VII had contributed no money to the defraying of expenses, he granted Cabot the right to enlist English sailors and sail west to Cathay in the name of the king of England. After six weeks of turbulent sailing the ship arrived off the northern coast of the New World. Cabot's main discovery was an extensive fishing ground, but he was disappointed in not reaching at least Japan and the Spice Islands. When he returned home, he was made Grand Admiral and given £10 by Henry VII with the right to make another voyage. He made his second voyage in 1498, coasting along the eastern shore in a vain attempt to find a passage to the orient.

Cabot was the first European after the hardy Northmen to land on the continent of North America, and, what was most important, his discovery laid the foundation for England's claim to the whole rich continent. Thus for £10 and a title England eventually won all of Canada, Newfoundland, Labrador, and even thirteen unruly colonies along the Atlantic coast—certainly an excellent business transaction.

For the next hundred years England tried to get to China by means of the famous "northwest passage." It was believed that such a passage must exist north of Canada. Explorers like Henry Hudson lost their lives in a vain attempt to discover this route. Meanwhile, an attempt to reach Cathay via a "northeast passage" above Russia also ended in disaster.

Certain other English explorers distinguished themselves in various ways. Sir Francis Drake circled the globe in 1577-1580, plundering Spanish galleons en route and bringing his ship *Golden Hind* home to Elizabeth laden with booty. Still later, in the eighteenth century, Captain Cook explored Australia and other lands in the south Pacific.

**French exploration.** Between 1534 and 1541 Jacques Cartier tried to find the northwest passage. As a result he discovered much about the St. Lawrence, and so gave France its claim to sovereignty over eastern North America.

France followed up this initial work by founding a colony in Nova Scotia in 1604. Then in 1608 an adventurous soldier called Samuel de Champlain (b. 1567) founded at Quebec the first permanent French settlement in America (the English had already established a colony in Virginia the year before). In later years this vigorous explorer and administrator journeyed through the lake which bears his name and went westward to the Great Lakes.

Other Frenchmen continued the task of opening up the interior of North America. The great explorer of the Mississippi was La Salle. In 1681 he sailed down the Mississippi to the Gulf of Mexico, taking possession of the entire territory and naming it Louisiana. He encountered frightful privations at times, his expedition more than once having to eat crocodiles in lieu of better food. La Salle himself nearly died from fever which racked his body for forty days. Thanks to La Salle more than to any other man, France was able later to claim the entire Mississippi valley.

### *Old Civilizations in the New World*

**The Spanish colonial empire.** Spanish exploration had won for Spain most of the New World—the southern portion of North America, all Central America, and the greater part of South America, as well as various groups of islands in the Pacific. Whereas the

eastern hemisphere proved to be of little colonizing value to Portugal, Spain found the opposite to be true in the western hemisphere. The New World was sparsely populated, and the native peoples were no match for the superior arms and organization of the in-

vaders. The *conquistadores* soon learned that important fact and ruthlessly began to exploit and subjugate the natives. How the highly civilized peoples of Mexico and Peru were largely tricked into subjugation by Cortes and Pizarro has been discussed earlier. The Spaniards subjected the Indians to slavery, pillaged them of their wealth, and often exterminated them.

Spanish colonial affairs were administered along absolutist lines. The king made all laws for Spanish America, and his agency was the Royal and Supreme Council of the Indies. This council nominated and the crown appointed the most important official, the viceroy. Each viceroy had his own advisory council. While the administrative system was designed to act fairly, difficulties of communication in the New World and the prevalence of graft in the highest administrative circles made it possible for the entire setup to become corrupt, cumbersome, and oppressive.

The commercial policy was one that came to be called mercantilism, a system in vogue in all the European countries in early modern times in which the ruler and his government rigidly supervised trade and all commercial activity, to the end that the mother country would be able to use her colonies, if she had any, for her own enrichment. It was believed that by exporting more goods than were imported a favorable trade balance would build up a constantly growing reserve of gold and silver. The king exercised a royal monopoly through the establishment of the *Casa de Contratación*, or House of Trade. It regulated commerce, furnished licenses, granted trading rights, and controlled emigration and immigration. Until the middle of the seventeenth century it was a crime punishable by death or lifelong servitude in the mines for a foreign shipmaster to enter Spanish-American waters. Later, smuggling did not cease on that account, while political losses by Spain in Europe finally brought about a liberalizing of trade policy overseas.

Yet despite the great wealth of the New World—its fabulous mines, of which the Spanish king enjoyed a "royal fifth" of all gold, silver, and precious stones, and its extensive farming and lucrative stock raising—Spain nevertheless lost her great colonial empire. Her colonial policy was harmful; mercantilism proved an artificial barrier to trade, and smug-

gling by other countries increased. The brutality of the colonists toward the natives, who were little used to such hard work as was now imposed on them, together with such innovations of European civilization as smallpox and cheap intoxicating liquors, wiped out a terrible percentage of the native population. This state of affairs was not properly corrected by the government. The loss of native help brought about a loss of productivity, and the introduction of Negro slaves to replace the Indians created more social problems. From the seventeenth century onward Spain gradually declined from a first- to a second-class power, losing her South American colonies in the early nineteenth century and Cuba and the Philippines in the last decade of the same century.

*The real "American tragedy."* "The only good Indian is a dead Indian" was the simple creed of the American frontier as the plainsmen drove back and exterminated the original inhabitants of the continent. Not only the Spanish and Portuguese but the English, French, and Yankees looked with contempt upon the Indian, considering him little more than a savage and his possessions and lands fit prey for Europeans. Today, after we have taken away his continents and destroyed most of his ancient heritage, after we have ruined his physical constitution with alcohol, tuberculosis, and smallpox and almost exterminated his race as we exterminated the buffalo, we realize the tragic injustice which we inflicted upon that proud individual, whose chief sin was that his way of living interfered with the territorial ambitions of those who came before us.

Today, when in many instances it is too late to remedy the situation, we are beginning to appreciate the Indian not only as a human being but also as the creator of cultures as complex and advanced as those which we studied in Egypt, Mesopotamia, and ancient India. It is true that we had much to offer besides "firewater" which would better the Amerind (American Indian). But he, too, had lessons to teach us, lessons which were admirably expressed in an answer delivered to the Virginia Commission in 1744 when that worthy body offered to educate six Indian youths at William and Mary:

"Several of our young people were formerly brought up at Colleges of the Northern Prov-

inces; they were instructed in all your sciences; but when they came back to us, they were bad runners, ignorant of every means of living in the woods, unable to bear either cold or hunger, knew neither how to build a cabin, take a deer, or kill an enemy, spoke our language imperfectly, were therefore neither fit for hunters, warriors, or counsellors; they were totally good for nothing. We are, however, not the less obliged by your kind offer, though we decline accepting it; and to show our grateful Sense of it, if the Gentlemen of Virginia will send us a Dozen of their Sons we will take great care of their Education, instruct them in all we know, and make Men of them."

When the Europeans first came to the western hemisphere, North and South America contained numerous peoples, each having distinctive patterns of living. Four civilizations stand out in particular: the Pueblo culture in the southwest, the Aztec in the valleys and highlands of Mexico, the Maya in the Yucatan peninsula of Mexico, and the Inca in South America. These four outstanding cultures evolved to such a complex level that they can be properly compared with those found in Egypt, Mesopotamia, and the Indus valley.

**The Pueblo culture.** In a high mesa land in the southwest there developed in prehistoric times probably the highest culture in North America, that of the Pueblo Indians. These peoples built two kinds of pueblos, or communal villages. The Mesa Verde people constructed their pueblos in caves usually located a short distance beneath the rim rocks of canyons and hence were true cliff dwellers. The picture shows a typical cliff pueblo. The other type was built on the floor of a canyon. At Chaco Canyon the sites of forty or more such settlements have been found. A few of the largest have been excavated and reveal the great advancement which these early peoples had made before they abandoned the area altogether. In Asia, in Africa along the Nile, and in Mexico and Central America the architecture of temples and palaces was far superior to anything built by the Pueblo Indians, but in architecture evolved for actual living and family needs, Pueblo residential buildings were the equal of anything found in the most advanced ancient cultures. The Pueblo Indians were unique among the Indians of North America in their use of masonry for permanent buildings, in contrast to the rela-

tively temporary structures of the more nomadic tribes.

The people of Chaco Canyon were agriculturalists, intensively cultivating numerous small plots of ground on the floor of the canyon, ranging from a few square feet to a few acres in area. Their crops consisted of corn, squash, beans, and a few other vegetables. They used no metals for farming, and their tools were made of wood and stone. The Pueblos were the only North American Indians to cultivate cotton for making textiles and to domesticate the turkey. They were also unique in that the men instead of the women did the weaving and the cultivating of the crops. Other interesting features of their culture were snake dances, rain ceremonies, and corn dances. Not knowing anything about the wheel, they had no kind of vehicle for hauling stone or logs. They made fine pottery, bone awls, and other implements and tools needed for living. The Pueblo Indian was exceptionally gifted in the making of pottery. No other tribe north of Mexico could rival the variety, form, and decoration of the Pueblo wares.

Of all the Indians of the North American continent, the Pueblo people were the only group to come near the excellence of the very advanced civilizations of the ancient Maya and Aztec Indians. The governing body in the pueblo was a council presided over by a chief, who was in no sense an arbitrary ruler but was duly chosen by the people. Some anthropologists assert that pueblo representative government is one of the oldest republican governments in world history.

**The Aztecs.** Twelve to fifteen hundred miles to the southeast of the Pueblo area, two other advanced cultures originated and developed, comparable in many respects to the highest civilizations found in the Nile, Mesopotamian, and Indus valleys. The Aztecs were the dominant people in the highlands of Mexico just prior to the coming of Columbus to the western continent. The rise of the Aztecs to power came about in this way. About the first century A.D. a people called the Toltecs swept down from the north and took possession of the Mexican plateau. Coming in contact with the Mayas, the Toltecs absorbed much of the Mayan culture and themselves built splendid cities. By the twelfth century the Toltecs and allied peoples created a sizable empire. Soon



A PUEBLO CLIFF DWELLING AT MESA VERDE

thereafter the Aztecs swept down from the northwest. About 1325 they founded a lake settlement called Tenochtitlan on the site of the present Mexico City. Then, allying themselves with two other tribes, the Aztecs created a confederacy which in the fifteenth century ruled an empire extending across Mexico from the Gulf of Mexico to the Pacific Ocean. Aztec domination, however, lasted less than a century, for the arrival of Cortes in 1520 brought about its collapse.

**Aztec religion.** The Aztecs, like the Mayas, were devoted sun worshipers. They were fiercely religious, so much so that the form and function of their great state might be called a democratic theocracy. In every city of their large domain great pyramids were built, and on top of them were erected their temples to the sun. In the temples stone altars were set up, on which were sacrificed thousands of victims in ceremonies dedicated to Huitzilopochtli, the war and sun god, a bloodthirsty deity whom tradition credited with having need of human blood to sustain him in his daily task. Captives, including men, women, and children, were led up to the summit of the pyramid, where, stretched out on the sacrificial stone, they had their hearts torn out

by the priests as an offering to the god. The ever-present problem was a sufficient supply of victims for these sacrifices. One method of getting them was to send emissaries among the neighboring tribes to stir up trouble so that an excuse for warfare could be found. Aztec superiority usually enabled them to capture large numbers of their nomad neighbors.

Fortunately there was a more benign god whose influence was in the direction of tolerance—Quetzalcohuatl, the gentle god of the winds and heavens, to whom no blood sacrifices were offered. This deity is symbolized in their art as a feathered serpent, a being with the combined qualities of a bird—the feathers—and a serpent—fangs, tongue, and scales on the body. This composite creature symbolized the earth as mother and the sky as father of all. The Aztecs were thus worshipers of both the earth and the sun. Although Huitzilopochtli, the war god, had the strongest influence, Quetzalcohuatl was associated with law, order, and enlightenment. Their belief in Quetzalcohuatl made for what refinement and virtue the Aztecs possessed. They also had some conception of an abstract god, who is referred to in their poems and other literary in-





*In a book of Indian folklore appeared this picture of an Aztec orchestra. A drum made from a tree trunk, sea snail shells, and rattlers are shown. The Aztecs also played clay pipes and flutes.*

ventions as the "Cause of All." The Aztecs believed in a life after death with future rewards and punishments, baptism as a means of getting rid of innate sin, and confession to do away with sins committed after birth.

**Culture advances.** The Aztecs developed efficient systems of irrigation and agriculture and had a very complicated form of government under Montezuma II at the time of the coming of Cortes. They also constructed a very accurate calendar and an interesting pictographic system of writing. Architecture, sculpture, pottery, and weaving were very highly developed. Their rather extreme religious development influenced nearly everything they did—their social organization, their

form of government, their agricultural practices, and their art. Because they worshipped the feathered serpent Quetzalcohuatl a great deal, it furnished the motif of much of their artistic endeavor. Note the simplified treatment of the anatomy of the figure on the opposite page, and the complicated decoration.

Among some writers there are differences of opinion as to the form of government of the Aztec peoples. Earlier writers looked upon it as an empire, and the ruler was thought of as an absolute king. The present tendency in interpreting their governmental development is to look upon it as essentially a democracy. All men except the rather large priesthood were soldiers. Schools were maintained for both groups, the priests and the warriors. Rank was determined mainly by success in war. Common warriors were classed in one rank; those who had distinguished themselves, in another, higher rank. Chiefs were elected from powerful families and could be removed. Sons or brothers of chieftains succeeded chiefs if they were fit.

**The Mayas.** More than a thousand years before the birth of Christ a group of Indians called Mayas migrated into northern Central America. It is estimated by some scholars that Mayan civilization had an even longer history before the beginning of the Christian era, for their calendrical system was in working order at least six hundred years B.C. Gradually evolving



their culture, by about 600 A.D. the Mayas had built wonderful cities in the southern part of their territory. Later, these southern cities sank into decay, and a new empire flourished in the northern lowlands, where thriving cities were erected. From about 980 to 1200 a confederacy of city-states held sway, and during that period there was a splendid Mayan renaissance, with advances in architecture, art, and drama. Mayan civilization at its height was much more advanced than any other on the western continents. The new empire, however, fell prey to internal strife, with petty chieftains fighting for supremacy. Added to civil war were the inroads made by Toltec and Aztec invaders, so that Mayan population and culture declined. When the *conquistadores* came upon the scene, the country was in chaos, and the Spaniards found it a simple matter to annex the Mayan peoples.

**Mayan society.** The Mayan political system, like that of the Greeks, was based upon independent city-states. Each city-state had perhaps 25,000 inhabitants and was protected by stone walls. Within the city-state there was strict social stratification. The highest classes consisted of the priests and nobles. Below them were the farmers, craftsmen, and merchants. Then came the lowest freemen, while the bottom rank was the slaves. The lot of the slaves was anything but advantageous, for until the arrival of the Spaniards there were no beasts of burden or wheeled vehicles in North America, and the slaves were made to perform all tasks of drudgery. Clothing was scanty, but the upper classes wore a great deal of jewelry, and tattooing was much in vogue. Daily bathing was practiced by all classes; the Mayans enjoyed a reputation for cleanliness in both person and dress.

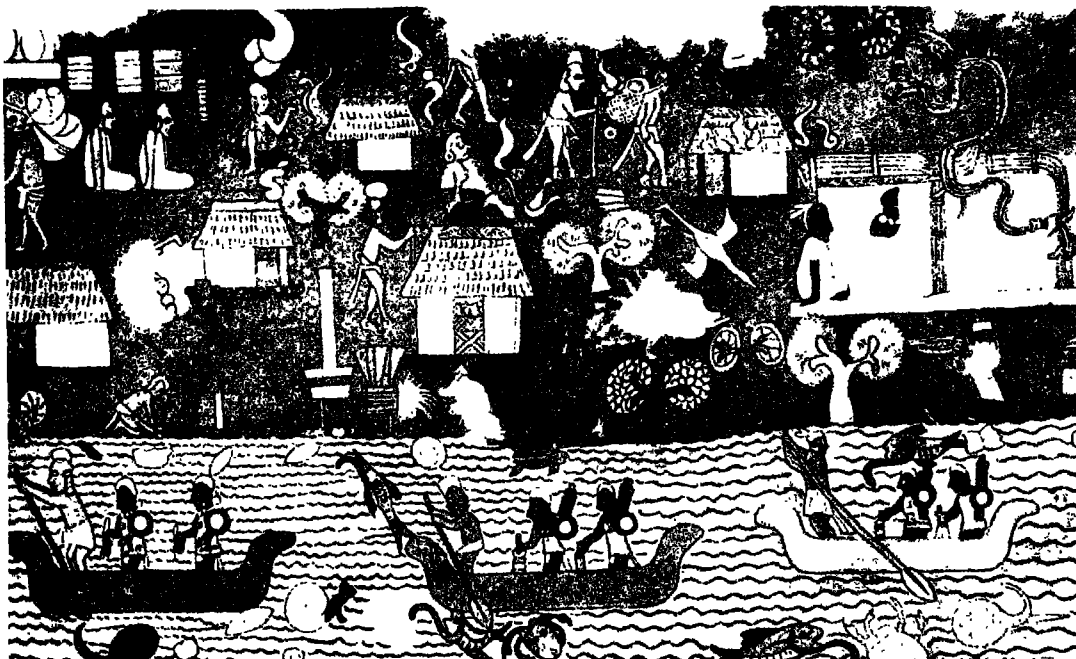
The successful conquest of rich agricultural lands made possible the achievement of a civilization ranking in many respects with the highest of the Old World. Less militant and warlike than the Aztecs, the Mayas were able to devote much more time to the development of the arts and sciences, philosophy and literature.

**Mayan art.** In architecture and sculpture they produced work of the highest quality. Their principal structures were built around courts or plazas, a plan which carried with it the idea of a civic center. In the court or plaza was built a terraced mound or pyramid. Temples built on top of the pyramids were gener-



*This is the Aztec god Quetzalcohuatl, looking not so kindly as one might expect but smoking a peace pipe. He is surrounded by feathered serpents.*

ally one story in height, but in palaces two and three stories were common. The Mayas applied their sense of design to architecture with fine success. They had not invented the true arch with a keystone but used a type of corbeled arch. This meant that the rooms were narrow. Limestone abounds in nearly all parts of the Mayan area; it was burned into lime from which they made concrete mortar. Their buildings were to a great extent made of rubble mixed with mortar and veneered with stone or stucco. The architectural composition emphasized horizontal lines and showed a fine sense of proportion, as the Temple of the Warriors on page 505 proves. Compare the temple



*In this Mayan village the inhabitants are seen fishing, tilling the soil, cooking, and playing games. Notice the motif of the plumed serpent, perhaps pictured as guarding over the village, in the upper right corner. This picture was an illustration for a Mayan manuscript.*

with the ziggurat of Sargon's palace in Assyria (page 61). At Chichen Itza are the ruins of the city which was the center of the golden age of Mayan art.

Much of their sculpture was architectural in use, decorating the terraces of the temple pyramids. The art of the Mayas was almost completely religious in inspiration, and used for motifs the deities and the animals connected with the deities—frogs, snakes, jaguars, and hummingbirds. At the time of the decorations at Chichen Itza the portrayals of gods and animals were highly stylized. Walls and sculptured figures were brilliantly painted, but no real mural paintings remain. Monuments, called stelae, were usually large limestone monoliths with four sides, ranging in height from three to twenty-seven feet. On them are carved dates and messages commemorating important events and accounts of the founding of cities. The sculpture on them was in many cases done in a flat relief and was again very stylized and decorative in treatment. Mayan sculptors had nothing but stone tools with which to do the carving; no metal tools have been found in archaeological sites.

Minor arts were highly developed also.

Weaving, jade sculpture, ceramics, and gold and silver work were all outstanding. These arts again testify to the extremely sophisticated sense of design and decoration typical of the Mayas. Their work compares favorably with the best of Egyptian design in its understanding of spacing and pattern.

**Mayan religion.** Like the Aztecs, the Mayas were sun worshipers. In the temples on top of the truncated pyramids there was always an altar on which human sacrifice was made to the sun. Their victims of sacrifice were not so numerous as those of the Aztecs, but probably their ceremonies were more complex and refined. Numerous gods and deities were worshiped, the most important of which corresponded to the Aztec Quetzalcohuatl. Religion was a very important part of their total life pattern. Its influence permeated all phases of social activity. Their government was a form of theocracy, dominated by a powerful priesthood. The priests were the only persons who could decipher the hieroglyphics and carve, or have carved, the inscriptions on stelae, lintels, and building façades. Evidently the observatories and all public buildings were erected and maintained under the supervision of the

priesthood and therefore had important religious bearings in the life of the people.

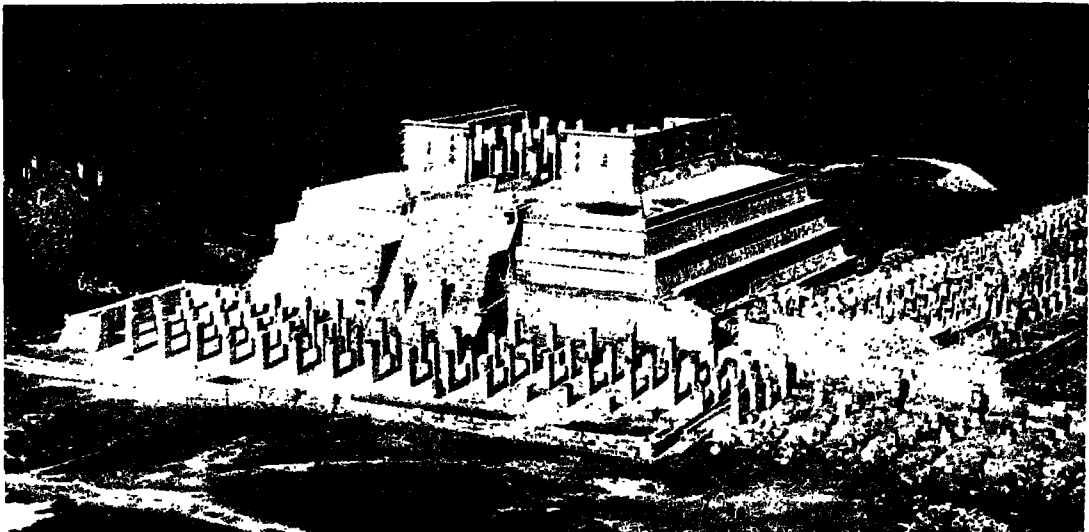
**Mayan science and education.** The Mayas gave much attention to dates and solar events and to keeping accurate account of important days for religious ceremonies. Their progress in measuring time by observing the movements of heavenly bodies amazes the most learned scientists of today. Using these precise observations, they were able to construct the most accurate calendar yet known, more accurate, in fact, than that of the ancient Egyptians and possibly fully as refined in calculation as our own calendar. To accomplish this they had several astronomical observatories. At one of these, two stelae were raised on opposite sides of the valley, establishing a line which runs within  $9^{\circ}$  north of west. Investigations have indicated that the sun sets behind the western stone twice a year, shortly after the vernal and autumnal equinoxes.

Accurate calculations and observations were made possible through the type of number system which the Mayas used. They invented the zero, which no other peoples on the western continent were able to do. Their number system, like that of the Aztecs, was based upon twenty, and they represented their notation by dots and bars. One dot represented one, two dots two, three dots three, and so on up to five, which was represented by a bar. A bar with one dot over it stood for six, a bar and two dots seven, and so on. Two bars stood

for ten, three indicated fifteen, and so forth. The highest number in their notation system was in the hundred billion. Both the Aztecs and the Mayas used approximately the same calendar, though they employed different words or names for days and dates and had a different system of notation. No Rosetta Stone has yet been discovered to give us a key to the inscriptions either on stelae or on building façades. The greatest use of hieroglyphic writing was in inscribing stone monuments in the earlier period of Mayan history; at a later time the writing was confined to books.

The Mayas wrote many books in symbolic and pictographic form, whose meaning has likewise not yet been deciphered. They used phonetic symbols rather than individual alphabetic letters. Most of the original Mayan books were destroyed by the Spanish *conquistadores*. Only three books, known as codices, have so far come to light. These copies reached Europe, it has been said, through some of the soldiers of Cortes and other military leaders. Most of their literature was burned by the priests and religious leaders who accompanied the Spanish occupation.

The Mayas had schools, primarily for the education of the priesthood, and a nunnery for girls of a religious caste. It is not known how extensive the training in these schools was, but it probably included all materials and habits related to religious ritual. The Mayas were more religious than warlike,



RUINS OF THE TEMPLE OF THE WARRIORS AT CHICHEN ITZA

and therefore most of their efforts at education were directed toward religion. Like all early peoples, they had some vocational education, for they were an agricultural people and had to become familiar with the cultivation of plants and breeding of animals. They also had a soldiery which had to be educated in the art of defense.

**Mayan economy.** Economically the Mayas were an agricultural people and devoted most of their efforts to producing food and clothing. Clearing away jungles and preparing ground for cultivation consumed much of their energy. They raised maize, squash, pumpkins, chili peppers, and many cereals and vegetables in their rich soil. They also developed irrigation to a high degree. Their agricultural efforts must have been very successful, for they supported a large population.

**Aztecs and Mayas, Greeks and Romans.** A fair analogy may be drawn between the Mayas and the Aztecs in the New World on the one hand and the ancient Greeks and Romans in the Old World on the other. Similarities may be found in the character, achievements, and general advancement in government, in art, and in philosophy, and in their general intellectual and artistic development. The Mayas were more artistic and intellectual than were the Aztecs, as is indicated by their sculpture, painting, architecture, science, and astronomy. Likewise the Greeks were more artistic and philosophical than were the Romans. Politically both Greeks and Mayas were divided into small states, and there was constant bickering and quarreling between petty sovereignties. Both had a number of temporary leagues composed of certain cities, and both were scarcely ever united except in the presence of a common enemy. Culturally both Mayas and Greeks were respectively one people with numerous linguistic dialectical differences. They both had a common religion and calendar. There is this difference: the Mayas were far more barbaric than the reason-loving Greeks.

Both the Aztecs and the Romans were brusque and warlike and built an advanced culture on the ruins of an earlier people's civilization which decayed or fell before their onslaught of arms. The Toltecs preceded the Aztecs in their power and cultural development, just as the Etruscans were forerunners of the Romans. Both the Etruscans and the

Toltecs created a culture, and the Romans and the Aztecs profited by these predecessors to rise to a greatness far surpassing them.

**The Incas of Peru.** South of the equator in Peru another very advanced culture and civilization flourished, reaching its highest development in the Peruvian highlands. All along the Pacific coast of South America are scattered archaeological sites, which indicate a large population and a complex culture scattered over a wide territory. Some anthropologists have estimated that the Inca population numbered ten million at the time of the Spanish conquest in the sixteenth century. Even today the bulk of the population on the Peruvian coast and highlands is from Inca stock. The Incas developed the highest culture in Peru, although the peoples who preceded them gave good account of their ability.

The history of the origins of the Peruvians is extremely indefinite because they left no form of script, even of a pictographic kind. However, there appear to have been three successive Indian civilizations in Peru. Up to about the ninth century an agricultural people inhabited the region, raising potatoes, corn, and peanuts. Then appeared a more civilized group, who built a great stone city thirteen thousand feet above sea level, a marvel of palaces, fortresses, and huge, perfectly carved monoliths. Then about the eleventh century some peoples calling themselves Incas, "children of the sun," settled in the fertile valley of Cuzco, and that center became the capital of the Inca empire, which extended for some 2700 miles at the time of the coming of Pizarro. The empire was consolidated in a thorough, Roman-like manner by the construction of fortresses at strategic points, the establishment of colonies of peasants in conquered areas, and the creation of a splendid system of roads and trails radiating from Cuzco to every part of the Inca dominions.

Among the Incas' many achievements, three in particular stand out. One was the erection of huge stone structures built either as temples or as forts. The second is their remarkable irrigation system. The third is the creation of a great empire under one ruler and the efficiency, absolutism, and organization of one of the most despotic forms of state socialism known to history.

**Architecture.** While the Mayas were very skilled in carving delicate hieroglyphics on

stone stelae and in the highly sculptured lintels and façades on buildings, the Incas and their predecessors excelled in carving out immense stone slabs or blocks from the mountain sides and transporting them for miles over mountains and rough terrain to the place where the stones were to be used in some large building or fortress. Most impressive is the size of the huge stone blocks and the accuracy in cutting them at the quarry to fit into a definite place in the temple or fortress wall. Some of these great monoliths weigh as much as three hundred tons, and many have sixteen or more sides which made the problem of exactly fitting one stone with another much more difficult. When laid in the wall they fitted so perfectly that no mortar was needed to hold them in place and a thin knife blade could not be inserted between them. All the work, of course, was done with stone tools. The transportation of the massive stone blocks is a mystery, for they had no wheeled vehicles, and there were no draught animals to be had in the whole of South America. It is not to be inferred, however, that they lacked ability in pottery, weaving, and metalwork, for in all these they produced some very excellent pieces.

**Irrigation.** No less important than the extensive building of temples and fortresses are the immense irrigation systems. Some of them still exist and in some places are yet in use. Whole mountain sides of some sections of the Andes were put under cultivation by building stone retaining walls three to six feet high. Behind the walls earth and loam from the small river valleys were carried up in baskets by untold numbers from the enslaved populations of the empire. On the edge of the narrow, winding strips of artificially prepared garden plots, small irrigation ditches were built, and in them water was conducted long distances to furnish the necessary moisture in that very arid country. In the lowlands were numerous narrow valleys made by small rivers flowing rapidly down to the Pacific. Intensive cultivation of the valleys and the irrigation plots scattered over the vast empire made the Inca land a wealthy agricultural area. The Incas raised lima beans, corn, cotton, squash, soybeans, peanuts, tomatoes, and many other crops.

**Government.** Neither the extensive stone building nor the intensive agriculture could

have been possible without the despotic form of government which the Incas developed. It was a hereditary absolute monarchy, or rather theocracy—for they, too, were sun worshipers and believed the Inca rulers were royal offspring from the sun. The deep religious devotion of the population made it possible, in part at least, for the Inca ruler himself to exercise the power of life and death over any individual in the empire. This was made further possible through the excellent military organization the Incas developed.

The Inca ruler had control over all food in all districts. If any district should produce more than was needed for that area, the ruler had the surplus stored for future use. If other districts through ill-luck or drouth failed to produce enough food, a sufficient quantity was transferred from the storehouse to the district needing it. The Incas had no money, but a perfect barter system of trade was in operation.

Every young man was required to marry by the age of twenty-four, and if he did not marry of his own accord, he was united to someone selected for him. Once a year marriage ceremonies were enforced on all who had reached the age limit. Girls married at eighteen.

**Contributions of the Amerinds.** The Amerinds, or American Indians, have probably inhabited the New World for the past twenty or twenty-five thousand years and have contributed immeasurably to the total culture of the Europeans who have been coming from across the Atlantic since the beginning of the sixteenth century. Their cultural influence has not been confined to this hemisphere but has spread to all parts of the world. Their contributions have been chiefly in place names, foods, utensils, tools, weapons, methods of transportation, and methods and products of agriculture. The Amerind has not added much directly to our literature, science, or philosophy but has indirectly indelibly stamped his personality and some of his vivid art upon our cultural life.

He has shown by his great skill in art and architecture that he is in no way inferior mentally to any other peoples. Coming from Asia centuries ago, and bringing with him little from his Asiatic home, he carved out a distinctive culture on this continent after he arrived. So far as is known he brought few if any seeds of plants, vegetables, or grain with him. Nor did he bring methods of agriculture,

patterns of pottery or architecture, house types, dress, or religion. These grew up mainly on the soil of his adoption. His architecture, pottery, and other crafts are certainly the most distinctly American arts yet produced on the western continent.

Another of the native Americans' contributions to our culture is a variety of foods, fruits, medicines, and drinks. Irish potatoes, sweet potatoes, maize, tomatoes, corn, pumpkins, peanuts, and numerous fruits were raised. Root crops are likewise an important legacy; we have the cassava, a root plant native to South America, which comes to our table as tapioca, and the tree which produces the cocoa bean from which chocolate and derivatives are made (native to tropical America and commercially very valuable to us). Probably the variety of native fruits which the Amerinds taught us to use is greater than that of any other food product. Pineapple, for example, a tropical American fruit, has been naturalized in all parts of the tropical world.

Among perfumes, drugs, and medicines we have the Peruvian balsam, which is used in perfumery. Coca, a shrub native to Peru, yields the anesthetic cocaine, obtained from the coca leaf. If taken through the mouth, cocaine tends to deaden hunger, and the natives used it for that purpose when they undertook long journeys where food was likely to be difficult to obtain. It also gives temporarily greater body power and endurance. Cascara is from the buckhorn of California and is used as a laxative in medicine. Sarsaparilla is a drug derived from fibrous roots of several species of smilax and is indigenous to Central America. Quinine, a specific remedy in malaria, comes from the cinchona. The Amerinds had already learned something about the effectiveness of all these drugs before the fifteenth century.

The world learned to use tobacco from the natives of the American continents. The comfortable pipe found now in most men's pockets and traveling bags, in lounges both private and public, and on nearly every drug-store or tobacco-shop counter in all parts of the world is a gift of the Amerind to our civilization. To him the pipe symbolized peace, the calumet, and even now brings peace and relaxation to many tired businessmen at the end of the day. Cigars, snuff, and chewing tobacco were other ways in which the Indians used tobacco.

Other materials used by America's prehistoric peoples which have materially aided our civilization are copal, the generic name for resins from which varnishes are made, and Central-American chicle, the base of chewing gum.

A few utensils, tools, and weapons from the Amerind enrich our culture, and though some of them in varying forms were known by other peoples in Europe, the types which the Indians used have modified our notions and use of them. The bow and arrow, the crossbow, the atlatl (throwing stick), the tomahawk, canoes, ollas, baskets, certain types of pottery, blankets, and various forms of clothing are to be accredited to the Indian.

*The origin of traits of culture.* The study of culture—how its traits originate, how it grows, and how it has become disseminated over the earth—is one of the most difficult problems that social sciences have to solve. Questions concerning the movements of the habits and utensils of man from one tribe to another, from one nation to another, are indeed complicated riddles, although the answer to some of the problems has now been determined. Still others remain a mystery. For example, the Egyptians developed writing and built pyramids, the Phoenicians invented the alphabet, the Hindus probably invented the zero, the Mesopotamians devised the keystone arch. The Mayas of Central America likewise invented the zero, wrote books (without an alphabet, however), and built pyramids. The Mayas, Aztecs, Incas, the Plains Indians, and other American tribes were sun worshipers; so were the Egyptians. The Incas had a form of mummification of the dead, as did the Egyptians. Generally most American tribes used some form of the bow and arrow; so did our early European ancestors.

*Parallel invention.* How is it that the Egyptians and the Mayas, peoples living ten thousand miles apart, with the vast and dangerous Atlantic Ocean between, developed similar cultural elements? Did the Egyptians first invent these traits and ideas and lend them to the Mayas of Central America, or did the Mayas invent them and lend them to Egypt, or did each people invent the ideas, practices, or items independently? Most anthropologists hold that neither the Egyptians nor the Mayas had any contact with each other at any time in the past and that each one developed all

the items, ideas, and practices of its own culture independently.

**Borrowing and modification.** The spread and practice of some useful ideas, materials, and arts cannot be explained by the principle of parallel invention. The seven-day week, which originated in Babylonia and spread to the Mediterranean basin and then into Europe, and the alphabet, which was first formulated by the Phoenicians, next improved and enlarged by the Greeks, and from the latter taken over in a modified form by the Romans, are examples of the borrowing and improvement of culture traits. The invention of the keystone arch by the brickmaking Babylonians and its improvement by the Etruscans and later European peoples is still another example of the spread of culture through borrowing and modification. So is the origin of the use of tobacco and the pipe by the Amerinds on the eastern coast of the United States, its spread to Europe and the whole civilized world, and its ultimate return to America by way of Asia to the Eskimo, thus completing the circuit around the earth.

**Origin of the American Indian.** It is generally agreed that Asia is the original home of the American aborigines, but we cannot connect the Amerind to any particular group in Asia, such as the Chinese. Exactly when the first inhabitants came to America is an open question, though evidence is rapidly growing to prove that it must have been approximately twenty to twenty-five thousand years ago. They crossed over by way of Bering Strait. The stream of migrants has never completely ceased; there are still interchanges of population between the American and Asiatic continents at that point. At first they probably came in little bands or groups, never in large numbers at a time. Some came down the west coast of North America, by both land and sea. Others cut across the Canadian northwest, fil-

tering into the western plains and the Mississippi basin. Probably all were nomadic when they came. Later some tribes developed agriculture and established a more or less sedentary life. Some remained nomadic until after the beginning of the European settlements, and still others, like the Apaches, did not become sedentary until the American government had corralled them into reservations.

**Degrees of civilization.** Why some tribes developed a very complex civilization while others almost adjoining them never became sedentary, or "civilized," is a question that remains as yet wholly unanswered. Why the Pueblo peoples, Aztecs, Mayas, and Incas became more civilized than others near them is a specific illustration of the complexity of the problem. Authorities generally agree that none of the migrants from Asia brought much of their ideas and culture with them from the motherland but that every tribe developed its own ideas, techniques, religion, and social organization independently after arriving on the western continent.

To what extent the cultural growth of such tribes as the peoples of the northwest coast, the Pueblos, the Mayas, the Aztecs, the Incas, and others would have evolved toward still higher and more complex civilizations had the Europeans never discovered the western continent will always remain an interesting conjecture. Some scholars assert that a cultural level almost equal to that of Europe at the time of discovery might have resulted. Others hold that cultural disintegration had already set in and that probably a state of primitive savagery in most parts of the continent would have resulted. Whatever might have happened, the destiny of such fine peoples as the Mayas, Aztecs, and Incas precipitated by the European conquest of the Americas will remain a historical tragedy.

### *Europe Invades the East*

**East versus west.** Whereas the Spaniards found the New World sparsely populated and relatively undeveloped, the Portuguese found in India and the Far East populations many times the size of those of Europe, enjoying cultures fully equal and in some ways superior to those of the occident. The Indians of the New World looked upon Colum-

bus and his men as great white gods; the Indians of the eastern world recognized Vasco da Gama and his cohorts as strong and well-armed pirates. Actually at this time the east saw little reason for accepting European domination. Furthermore, the east was still strong enough to resist the encroachment of the west. Not until the eighteenth and nineteenth cen-



turies did the occidental nations subjugate Asia, and then not by superior civilization but by superior force of arms.

*Motives of the Portuguese.* The far-seeing Prince Henry the Navigator had a double purpose in sending his Portuguese mariners down the uncharted coast of Africa. He wanted to add new lands to the domain of Portugal, and he earnestly sought to bring Christianity to those peoples who had not yet heard of the faith. So closely interwoven were these ambitions that the struggle for foreign conquest assumed a religious fervor which seemed to sanctify even the most predatory acts. Portugal and Spain had slowly and painfully achieved national independence by driving out the hated Moors; hence the Portuguese invasion of Mohammedan-controlled waters in Asia partook of the nature of a crusade. Spaniards and Portuguese looked upon the Mohammedans as the spawn of the devil, and their attitude partly explains the deeds of horror and cruelty which these Christians perpetrated in the east. Furthermore, when in 1493 the Pope divided the non-European world between Spain and Portugal, he did so with the express understanding that the Portuguese would carry the Christian faith to all lands that came under their jurisdiction in the east.

Yet underlying the Portuguese voyages was an even stronger motive. When the indomitable da Gama returned to Lisbon bearing from India a cargo worth sixty times the cost of the expedition, there was no doubt as to what would follow. The next year an expedition of twelve hundred men set sail for India under the command of Cabral. For more than a century the little kingdom of Portugal, possessing but a million inhabitants, sent its sturdy ships and its booty-loving, heathen-hating sailors into Asiatic waters, and grew rich. Aiding the Portuguese at all times was their fine equipment. Their ships were more strongly armed and better navigated than those of their Mohammedan and Indian foes, while armor which almost suffocated the Portuguese soldier in tropic heats at the same time made him nearly impregnable to the poor weapons of his enemy.

Completely self-reliant, the Europeans invaded Indian waters. Each year ships were sent to the new headquarters at Cochin on the southwest coast of India. Some of them would load pepper, the spice most treasured in

Europe at the time, and return home, while other ships would remain on the Indian coast to strengthen the Portuguese fleet. The newcomers soon established a monopoly over trade in the Indian Ocean.

*Albuquerque's strategy in the east.* In 1509 the most famous of Portuguese governors, Alfonso de Albuquerque, was sent to India. He was of medium height, sparsely built, and of ruddy complexion, with a high forehead and a beard that reached to his waist. Albuquerque went to India resolved to consolidate Portuguese supremacy in the east. Realistically the viceroy saw that his countrymen could maintain such a position only by force of arms. Yet they were but a handful of men who could never expect to defeat both the Mohammedan and Hindu hosts. To his mind the solution lay in the establishment of fortified centers at strategic sites which would dominate the trade routes and protect Portuguese interests on land. Such cities, Albuquerque reasoned, would be rich enough to supply revenues for maintaining administrators and could also provide the means for sheltering soldiers and refitting ships after their long voyages. Possession of Aden, for example, could close the mouth of the Red Sea and thereby divert trade to the Persian Gulf, commanded by the Portuguese city of Ormuz.

Albuquerque failed to capture Aden, but possession of Socotra, gained in 1506, gave the Portuguese control of the Red Sea trade. Albuquerque made Goa the center of Portuguese operations in the east. He made it his viceregal capital, where he stationed numbers of troops and built a large dockyard. In 1511 he sailed to Malacca, a large trading center in the Malay archipelago. After a week of bitter street fighting, Malacca fell to the invaders, and Portuguese control was established.

*Extension of the Portuguese empire.* The capture of Malacca was of inestimable value. It was a logical jump from here to the small but marvelously rich Moluccas, whence came the finest spices, nutmeg, and cloves. The occupation of Malacca also opened the way to Portuguese participation in the rich trade with China. The first Portuguese ship to invade Chinese waters docked at Canton in 1516. From that time on, except for periods of non-intercourse, the Chinese and the Europeans carried on an expanding trade. In 1557 the Portuguese were granted the right to establish

a settlement near Canton, which grew into the city of Macao.

The Portuguese early established control over Ceylon, dominating points about the coast which gave them the control of the wealthy cinnamon-growing regions of the island. A glance at the map on pages 512-513 will show that by controlling Ceylon on the west and the Malay archipelago on the east, the Portuguese also commanded the coastal trade of the Bay of Bengal.

**Portuguese colonial government.** During the sixteenth century Portugal enjoyed almost undisputed sovereignty of the eastern sea routes. Goa, capital of the empire, was an opulent city filled with large churches and public buildings. One sixteenth-century visitor reports, "The traffic was so great that it is impossible to imagine it; the place was immensely large, and it was inhabited by people rich not with riches like ours, but with richness like that of the Crassi and others of those old days. And such merchandise! Diamonds, rubies, pearls, and, besides all that, the horse trade. That alone produces a revenue in the city of 120 to 150 thousand ducats."<sup>3</sup> In Goa lived the viceroy of India, sent out from Portugal for a term of three years.

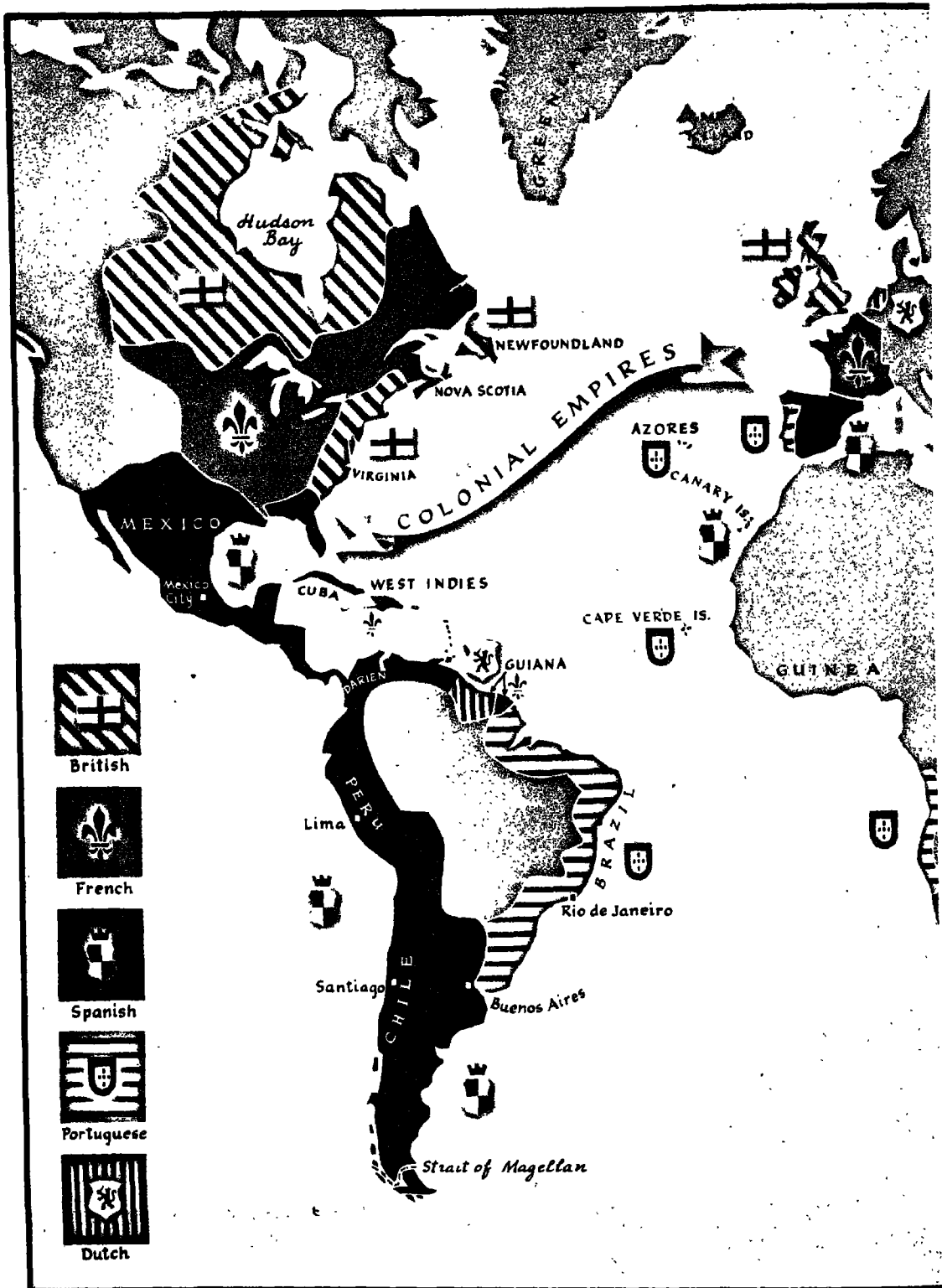
Under the viceroy at Goa were numerous civil and legal officers, while *capitans* had charge of subordinate governments at other centers. Unfortunately for Portugal's interests, her governmental organization both at home and abroad was inefficient and corrupt. Not until 1591, in fact, when her Indian power was waning, was there a council or even a minister in Portugal to supervise colonial affairs.

**Decline of the Portuguese empire.** There is no denying the richness of Portugal's commercial empire. She had royal monopolies of pepper, nutmeg, cloves, mace, silk, and lace, and monopolies over trade both between India and Europe and between different ports in India. Turkish traders were virtually cut off from Indian commerce, while Venice and Genoa also suffered seriously. But Portugal's star was destined to set for many reasons. One was governmental corruption. Another lay in the heavy mortality resulting from the great risks of trading in those days. The climate at Goa, for example, was most unhealthy, while the deaths from scurvy and accidents at sea sometimes reached an appalling figure. Ships

were terribly overcrowded, and it has been estimated that less than sixty per cent of the men who left Portugal reached India. In one journey nine hundred of the eleven hundred men on board ship perished. The hardest and most adventurous of Portugal's sons shipped away to the fabulous east, but relatively few ever returned. By 1538 difficulty had arisen in procuring the necessary quota of men from Portugal's small population, and in desperation criminals sentenced to die were allowed to live in India in perpetual banishment. The quality of stock thus declined as time elapsed, and the morale of Goa and other centers steadily deteriorated owing to the influx of such men, the easy acquisition of riches, and the debilitating climate.

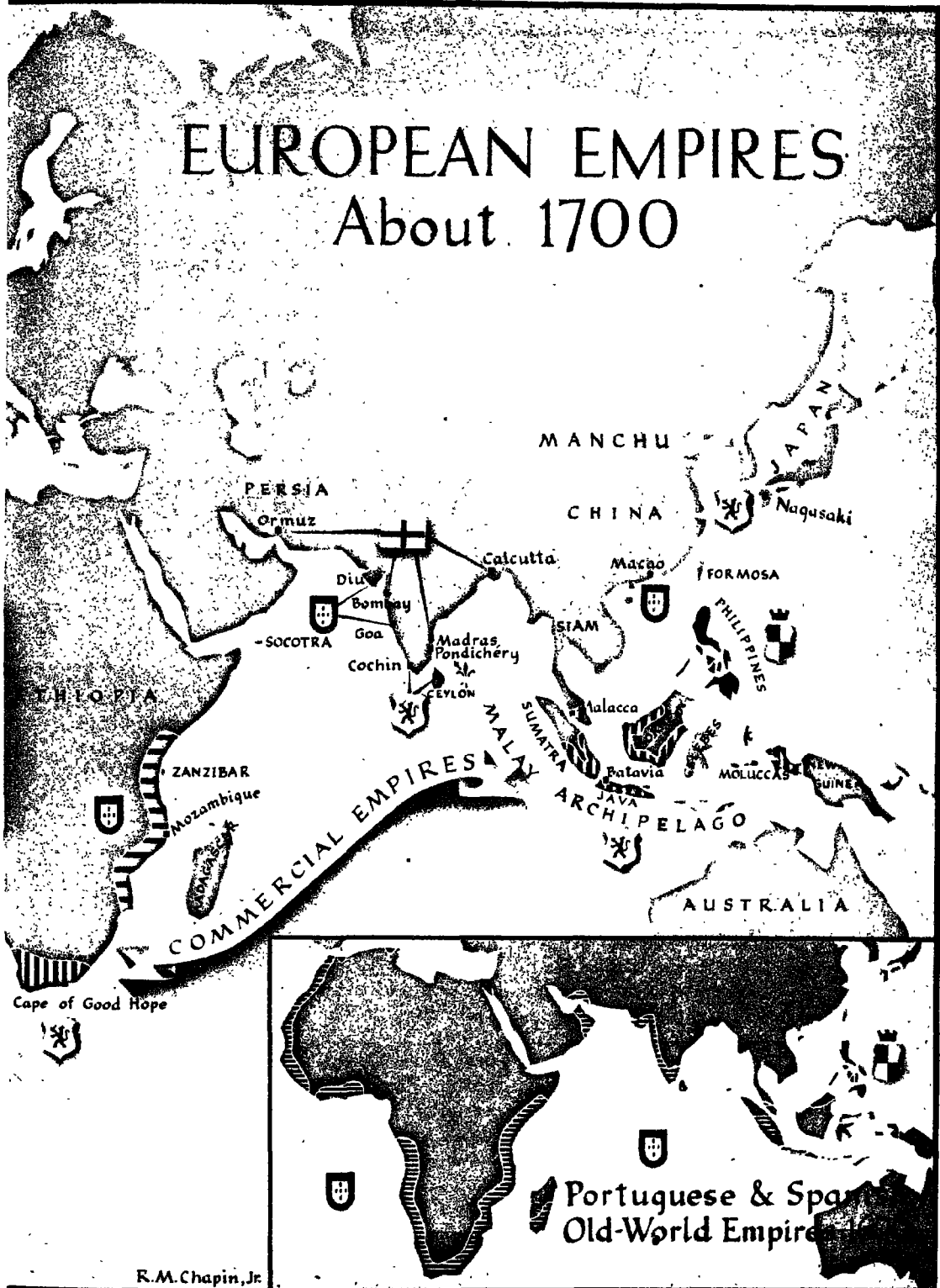
Still another important reason for Portugal's decline in the east was the cruel intolerance displayed by the Portuguese everywhere they journeyed. The excesses of even such noteworthy men as Vasco da Gama and Alfonso de Albuquerque are lamentable. Da Gama mercilessly burned a pilgrim ship carrying hundreds of men, women, and children, remaining callously indifferent to the pleas of mothers who held up their babies in begging for mercy. At one settlement da Gama captured about eight hundred sailors from small craft, hanged them at the yardarms, cut off their hands and heads, loaded them in a vessel, and let it drift ashore. At first the Portuguese were content to harry and slay only the Mohammedans whom they encountered, asking no mercy and giving none, while treating the Hindus with some measure of tolerance. But after 1540 the Church ordered that Hindus in Goa could not practice the rites of their faith, and their temples were demolished. The Inquisition had now made its appearance in India, and relapsed converts and heretics filled the prisons. Hindu merchants, refusing to dwell in Portuguese territory under such conditions, left it in huge numbers. The loss of their trade seriously impaired the economic life of Goa and other European-held centers.

**Dutch inroads in the east.** The Portuguese decline was accelerated by a new and serious thrust from a European neighbor—Holland. Two political events in sixteenth-century Europe helped create this new danger to Portuguese imperial power. One of them was the Netherlands revolt against Spanish rule. The other was the Spanish acquisition of the crown



# EUROPEAN EMPIRES

## About 1700



of Portugal. After the Dutch had declared themselves free of Spanish domination (1579), they looked upon Spain's trade and colonies as fit prey for their ships. With the union of Portugal with Spain, the colonial possessions of both countries were administered as one. The Dutch now felt free to attack Portuguese territory in eastern waters, because it was part of the empire of their deadly enemy, Spain. Furthermore, the rich carrying trade which the Dutch had enjoyed, distributing throughout northern Europe the eastern goods brought to Lisbon, ceased when Spain took control of Portuguese ports. If Dutch trade was even to exist, the Hollanders had to go out and capture it at the expense of Spain.

This they did. In the 1590's various Dutch trading groups sailed for the Malay archipelago, preferring that region to western India, where the Portuguese were in greater force. But the competing trading companies lowered one another's rate of profit. In 1602, therefore, they amalgamated into the United East India Company. The Dutch government gave this powerful body the right to trade and rule from the Cape of Good Hope eastward to the Strait of Magellan. The Dutch East India Company broke the power of the Portuguese in the islands of the Malay archipelago.

**The Dutch East Indies empire.** In 1609 the Dutch established the office of governor general. This official, with a council of seven (later nine) members, had final authority over all matters concerning trade, war, justice, and administration in each Dutch settlement. In time the governor general came to have supreme authority in the East Indies. In 1618 a governor general was appointed who might be called the Albuquerque of the Dutch. J. P. Coen was the administrator who laid the firm foundations of the East Indies empire. Coen believed that his countrymen must possess the productive areas if they were to control them, whereas Albuquerque had felt that it was sufficient to occupy strategic, fortified sites which commanded maritime trade routes. Coen built a fortified trading station at Batavia in Java, a site which eventually became the capital of the Netherlands East Indies. From the extremely wealthy island of Java Dutch ships carried back to Europe such sought-after products as coffee, tea, spices, indigo, sugar, mace, nutmeg, camphor, and cloves. The Dutch gradually extended their control over the en-

tire island, while its strategic situation in the center of the Malay archipelago enabled them in time to take over Sumatra to the west and the rich Spice Islands (Moluccas) to the east.

Meanwhile the Portuguese power in India and Ceylon fell before the onslaughts of the Dutch. By 1658 the Portuguese had been driven from Ceylon, and the Dutch had captured the lucrative cinnamon trade. They also coveted the pepper trade along the western coast of India. Despite the peace made in 1661 between Portugal (now independent of Spain again) and Holland, the Dutch in India used illegal pretenses to wrest from their Portuguese rivals such wealthy centers as Cochin.

By the latter half of the seventeenth century the Dutch were the supreme European power in the east. The Portuguese had fallen before their attacks, and Portugal's trade had dwindled. Portugal still held Goa and Diu in India and Macao in China, but they were no longer significant factors in Asiatic affairs. The Dutch, however, did not try to monopolize all trade east of the Cape of Good Hope, as the Portuguese had tried in vain to do. Rather they concentrated on holding the rich East Indies. The vast subcontinent of India was thus left open to control by another invader—England.

**The English in India.** In 1600 Queen Elizabeth incorporated the East India Company, granting it a monopoly of trade from the Cape of Good Hope eastward to the Strait of Magellan. This rich and famous company, which was at times the most powerful political force in India, quickly saw the value of establishing posts at the important points of trade. The Company established numerous outposts scattered at strategic points in India, the islands of the Malay archipelago, and even in Japan. It put the Portuguese posts on the Persian Gulf out of business in 1622, acquired Madras in 1639 and Bombay in 1668, and founded Calcutta in 1690. The Company pushed forward in India by means of political stratagems, presents, bribes, diplomacy, compulsion over weak native rulers, and downright hard work on the part of English merchants and administrators. The Company failed to obtain a permanent foothold either in the East Indies, where the Dutch were too powerful, or in Japan, but it found India rich enough. Whereas in 1601 it could send out only four second-hand vessels, in 1801 it owned 122 ships, some of them weighing 1400 tons, large ships for those days.

*The French in India.* Meanwhile the French had not been unconcerned over the profits wrung from the east by their Dutch and English rivals. However, the French mercantile classes occupied a smaller proportion of their country's population than did the mercantile classes of Holland and England, and their influence accordingly was much smaller. Nevertheless Louis XIV, acting on the advice of his economic adviser, Colbert, began to build up France's mercantile power by establishing a French East India Company in 1664. This body was financed in large measure by the state and was always subject to governmental regulation. Despite opposition from the Dutch and English on the scene, the French succeeded in 1674 in establishing a center at Pondichéry on the southeast coast of India. The Company established other posts along the Indian coasts, but fared none too well.

After 1700, however, the French grew stronger in India. The Portuguese had controlled the east during the 1500's, gradually losing out to the Dutch, who in turn during

the 1600's garnered most of the profits in the east. Gradually the Dutch concentrated more and more on the East Indies, while the English East India Company built up a commercial stronghold in India. After 1700, while Holland's profits remained large in her own sphere, they did not increase at the enormous rate enjoyed by the English in India. The great rivals of the English were the French. The rapid betterment of France's position in India in the eighteenth century was due largely to the work of an able administrator named Dupleix. That astute statesman went out to India in 1720, where he amassed a fortune and learned much about native politics. In 1741 he became governor of Pondichéry.

At this time the Mogul empire was quite effete. Certain rulers (nabobs) of large regions in the empire, such as the Deccan and Bengal, had become semi-independent princes. Dupleix used this lack of national unity to advance his own interests. The next few years were to see a sharp struggle between France and England in India.

### *The Mogul Empire in India*

**C**ommercial empires in the east. The European empires created in Asia were commercial rather than colonial. They were areas possessing fortified trading sites and commercial concessions rather than regions populated by European emigrants. Whereas the New World soon had a preponderance of Europeans who transplanted their own customs and institutions to North and South America, Asia continued to enjoy its indigenous cultures, in India, China, and Japan, and European civilization was found only in scattered settlements belonging to a number of foreign powers.

*Babur, founder of the Mogul empire.* In 1494, two years after Columbus had sailed westward toward India, a descendant of Tamerlane and Genghis Khan mounted the throne of a little principality in Turkestan. The youthful ruler was Zahir-ud-din Muhammad, surnamed Babur (the Tiger). Babur was the founder of the great Mogul empire. An able general with the strength of a giant, Babur spent his early years in gaining the throne of a city on the highway to India. Babur says in his memoirs that he used to think ceaselessly of the capture of Hindustan. At length, in 1524 he set out with an army of

no more than 12,000 men to achieve his goal. He defeated the large forces belonging to the sultan of Delhi, who then ruled all Hindustan, and in 1526 Babur made himself sultan. In 1527 he defeated the Rajputs, who were trying to bring back Hindu supremacy in northern India.

The submission of the Rajputs placed the Mogul dynasty securely on the Delhi throne. The name "mogul" is a corruption of "mongol," a word much dreaded in India because of its association with Tamerlane. It has been suggested that "mongol" was converted into "mogul" through either a common mispronunciation or a wish on the part of the Indians to cover the fact that the Moguls were in truth Mongols.

Babur himself did not live long to enjoy the fruits of his victory. He died in 1530, worn out by his campaigns and adventures.

*Akbar's empire.* Babur's grandson was named Muhammad, but he is known as Akbar, meaning "Very Great." Until he was eighteen, his kingdom was administered by a regent. In 1560 Akbar took over full control himself. His empire at that time consisted of an eighth of India, a strip of territory some three hundred



*Akbar receives ambassadors to celebrate the submission of Bayram Khan. Note the Persian influence in faces, the canopy, and the trappings of the horse.*

miles wide extending from the northwest frontier eastward to Bengal. By 1576, although only thirty-four years old, he had made himself ruler of all northern India from the Indus to the mouth of the Ganges and from the Himalayas to the Vindhya mountains. In 1593 Akbar decided to annex the Deccan. The campaign was unwise, for the Vindhya mountains constitute the natural boundary of Hindustan, and the Deccan war later proved to be the downfall of the Mogul empire. When Akbar died in 1605, his dominions exceeded those of any previous Indian monarch.

**Akbar's administrative measures.** Akbar's greatness is not to be measured by his military conquests only, but rather by his governmental, cultural, and religious contributions. As an administrator he had few equals. He

divided his empire into twelve provinces (later increased to fifteen), ruled by royal or noble governors. Each province was divided in turn into districts, and each district into yet smaller units. Thus the problem of administration was very thoroughly handled. The emperor made all appointments to the higher posts himself, and the officials received monthly salaries from the imperial treasury. He kept a strict check on bribery and embezzlement and left a rich surplus in the treasury when he died. Taxation was somewhat more lenient.

Law was ably administered. The headman in each village was responsible for keeping law and order, while special officials were responsible in the larger cities. The emperor himself constantly acted as judge, for everyone in his domains had the right to appeal personally to the ruler. He forbade child marriage and suttee, permitted widows to remarry, abolished the slaughter of animals for sacrifice, and allowed perfect freedom of religious belief. As in contemporary Europe, the use of various tortures (such as impalement, amputation, and death by elephant dragging) was allowed. However, Akbar probably had the most enlightened code in existence in the sixteenth century.

**Akbar's patronage.** Akbar as a boy had refused to do his lessons, so that until his dying day he could neither read nor write. But he possessed an insatiable love of learning and constantly had all types of literature read to him. Because of this practice, Akbar may have been actually the "best read" man of his age. He paid enormous sums to artists and penmen to design and transcribe books, and he collected a valuable library of 24,000 volumes. Like his grandfather Babur, Akbar had a poetic nature, and he therefore liberally patronized poets, painters, and architects. Music, painting, and architecture advanced rapidly owing to his liberal patronage. Largely because of Akbar's sympathy for both Moslem and Hindu cultures, the architecture of his period interwove Persian and Indian styles. Manuscript illumination was highly developed, and brilliant, jewel-colored paintings decorated Indian books. One of these miniature paintings, with its oriental flat pattern and lack of perspective, is illustrated on this page.

**Religious tolerance of Akbar.** Religion is taken very seriously in India, and tolerance among faiths has never been the rule. Buddhism was undoubtedly the most tolerant of

all the major religions, yet its own gentleness only made it easier for fanatical Brahmans to drive it out of India. The history of Hindu-Moslem relations has always been a bloody one. During Akbar's time the Hindus were the object of endless persecution by their Moslem conquerors. Because Akbar realized that religious strife made for political disintegration, he came to favor complete tolerance of belief. But his views were not based simply on political grounds; his own temperament was the chief reason for his amazingly liberal policy.

Akbar felt that every faith had something of truth to offer but that all were untrue when they denied each other's sincerity of purpose. Every Thursday in his Hall of Worship he held religious debates which often lasted until dawn, to which Mohammedans, Brahmans, Jains, and Zoroastrians were invited. Hearing of the arrival of Jesuits in India, he had them stay at his court for periods of several years. He treated them with every courtesy, and they built a chapel and translated the Gospel into Persian. Akbar even attended Mass, wore a medallion with the image of the Virgin, and walked in public with one of the Jesuit fathers.

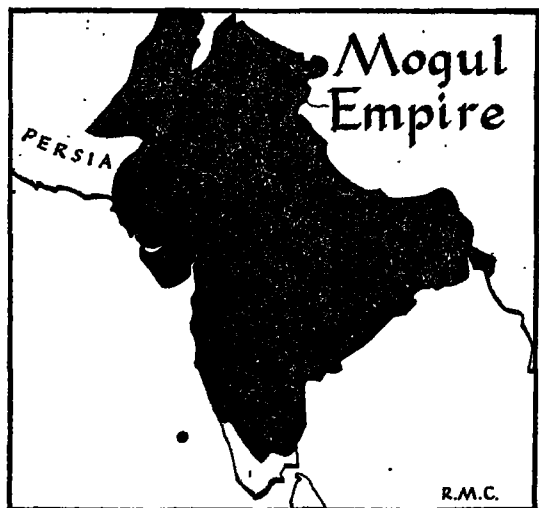
But the sultan could never accept any one religion completely, and the Jesuits had to admit ruefully that "the Emperor is not a Muhammedan, but is doubtful as to all forms of faith and holds firmly that there is no divinely accredited form of faith, because he finds in all something to offend his reason and intelligence, for he thinks everything can be grasped by reason."<sup>4</sup> Instead he created his own religion, promulgating a new faith called *Din Ilahi*, the Divine Faith, which incorporated what he considered the best features of the other existing religions. By it he hoped to bring all India into common agreement on religious matters. But traditional bigotry was too strongly entrenched in the older faiths. When Akbar died his religious theories died with him.

**Akbar's grandson, Shah Jahan.** Shah Jahan, who came to the throne in 1627, held none of Akbar's views on religious toleration. He returned India to the Moslem faith, persecuted the Christians, and destroyed Hindu temples wholesale. We will recall that Akbar had tried to conquer the Deccan; in 1630 Shah Jahan attempted the same conquest. He eventually subjugated it and divided the territory into four provinces. In 1657 his health began to fail, and a ruinous civil war broke out among

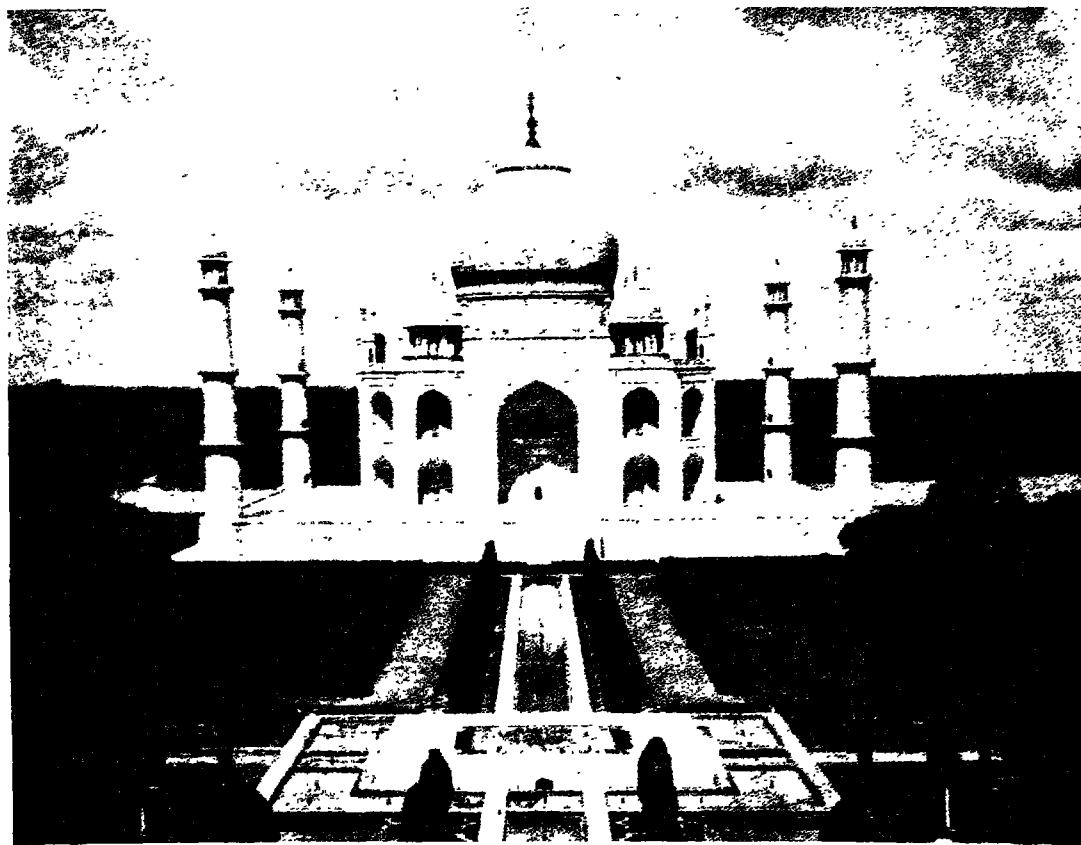
his four sons, each of whom was practically an independent ruler. When Shah Jahan died at the age of seventy-four in 1666, his son Aurangzeb succeeded him as emperor.

The reign of Shah Jahan marks the height of power for the Mogul empire. The emperor amassed a huge treasure at Agra. His hobby being costly and beautiful buildings, he tore down the red sandstone buildings of Akbar at Delhi and raised a huge capital of marble containing fifty-two palaces. The famous Hall of Private Audience had ceilings of solid silver and gold and a Peacock Throne encrusted with costly gems. On the walls still can be seen the inscription by a Moslem poet, "If anywhere on earth there is a Paradise, it is here, it is here." Besides making Delhi a site of unrivaled splendor, Shah Jahan erected a magnificent fort at Agra. Here stood the famous Pearl Mosque, while across the river rose the slender minarets of the Taj Mahal, the marble mausoleum built as a final resting place for Shah Jahan and his favorite wife. Twenty-two thousand workmen labored twenty-two years to complete the enormously costly structure. It shows of course the influence of the Moslems in the general composition (compare the picture on page 249) and particularly in the beauty and elegance of decoration.

**Decline of the Mogul empire.** Lavishness of building and wealth of treasury such as existed in the days of Shah Jahan endured only at a terrible price, the grinding of the emperor's subjects to exploit every possible source of income. The Mogul empire under Shah Jahan







*All symmetry and formality is the jewellike Taj Mahal with its gleaming dome, its precise gardens with their neat, clipped hedges. The Moslem influence is evident in the arches, the domes, the decoration, and the minarets.*

was still powerful. But the misery of its people, the oppression of non-Mohammedan faiths,

and the lack of wisdom of its rulers had sown the seeds of its final destruction.

### *The Advent of Modern China (1368-1839)*

**E**stablishment of the Ming dynasty. For thousands of years prior to the entrance of Portuguese ships into Canton harbor, China had enjoyed a rich and largely indigenous culture. In our last chapter on the evolution of the Chinese people, we noted especially the great advances made during the T'ang and Sung dynasties in literature and art. This was the age of Li Po and Tu Fu, the delightful poets, the artist Chiang T'san and the printing of the Buddhist book, the *Diamond Sutra*. But like other dynasties, the T'ang crumbled away, leaving the Flowery Kingdom in a weakened state. Finally, groups of tribes calling themselves Mongols overran China, establishing the dynasty which bore their name, headed by the

renowned emperor Kublai Khan. The Mongol dynasty adopted the superior Chinese civilization and so reigned tolerantly and well. But weak rulers and the gradual assimilation of the Mongols by the numerically superior Chinese led to the overthrow of the dynasty. Rebellion broke out, and in 1368 an ex-Buddhist priest captured the capital city, Peking, and established the Ming dynasty.

The ex-Buddhist monk who captured the imperial throne and established the Ming dynasty took the reigning title Hung Wu. He made himself popular by eradicating all traces of Mongol rule and reestablishing such Chinese traditions as the "scholar rule," with which the Mongols had dispensed. He aided

education and had a law code compiled known as the Code of the Great Ming. His reign of thirty years was marked by prosperity, but his successors were not all so fortunate. However, nearly all patronized art and public works.

**The Portuguese in China.** During the Ming dynasty three important foreign contacts were established. Earlier in the chapter we noted that in 1516 the first Portuguese ships arrived at Canton. The story of the coming of the Europeans to China is another example of gross misbehavior on the part of the invaders, who did not appreciate the customs of the people they met and treated the "heathen" with arrogance and cruelty. The mutual suspicion and hostility which has marked Sino-European relations in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries stems from this period.

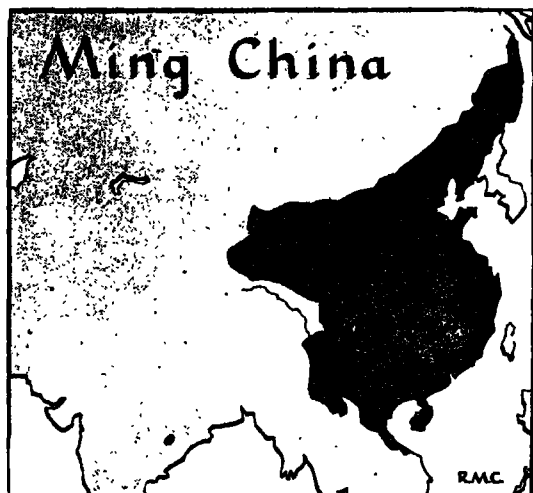
When the Portuguese first arrived in China, the government afforded them the same privileges which Persian and Arab merchants had enjoyed for centuries. Unfortunately, the Portuguese carried into China their misguided viewpoint that non-Christian property was valid booty under any circumstances. A typical case of violence was one Portuguese captain's activity at Canton. This braggart sailor built a small fort, erected a gallows, and, scandalizing the Chinese, proceeded to hang one of his own men. He was discovered buying Chinese boys and girls who had been kidnaped. To climax his violent acts, he refused to leave port when ordered, but waged a bloody skirmish in the streets of Canton, where several Portuguese sailors were slain. Tales which Chinese officials had heard from merchants returning from India, the Persian coast, and the Spice Islands were now confirmed: The Portuguese come first to a new land in the guise of peaceful traders, but, as soon as they gain a foothold, they pillage and establish their own authority. The upshot of the incidents was the banning of the foreigners from Chinese waters.

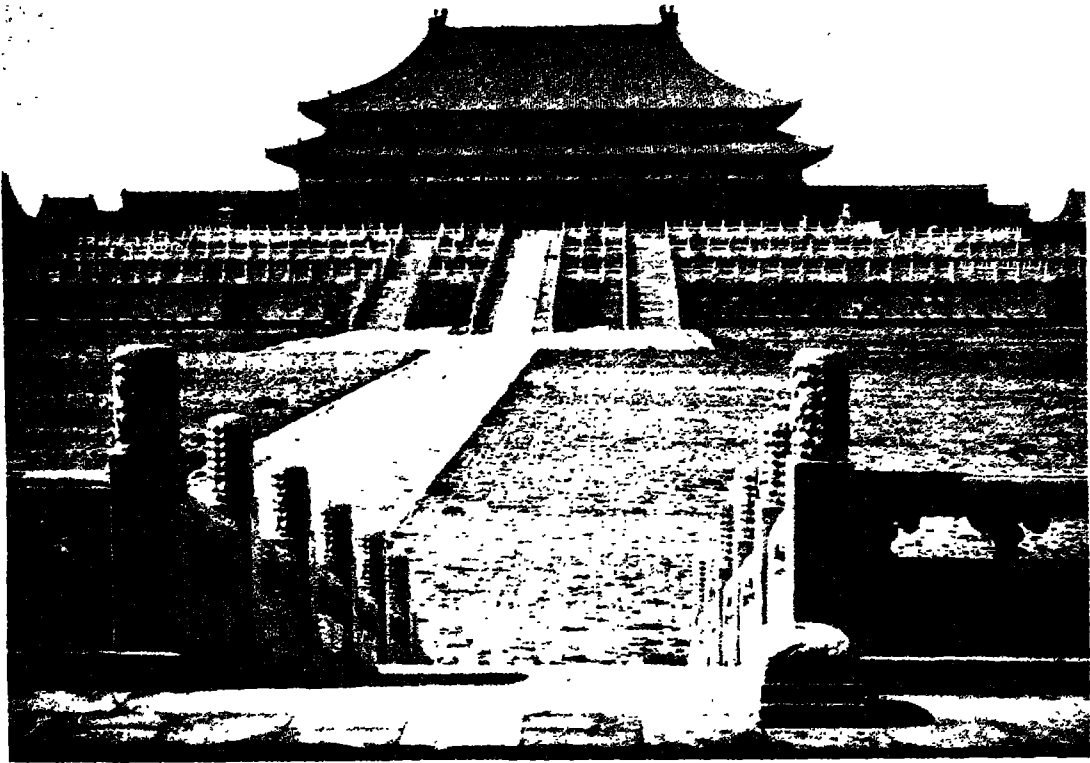
In 1542, however, the Portuguese reappeared, at a coastal town whose officials either had forgotten events twenty years earlier or else risked safety for the sake of profitable trading. At first all went well, and hundreds of Portuguese flocked to the city. But when the foreigners felt themselves powerful enough, they fell back into their old practices and began to pillage and murder. The embittered city officials raised a force which attacked the Portuguese fort and slew all who could not

make their escape. It is little wonder that westerners earned at this time the nickname "ocean devils." However, because trade was mutually profitable to Chinese and foreign merchants, in 1557 the Portuguese were granted the right to trade at Macao, a peninsula in the Canton estuary. Here, under close surveillance and subject to many strict regulations, the "ocean devils" were allowed to trade.

**Jesuit missionaries in China.** The second foreign contact was the coming of Jesuit missionaries. The Jesuit leader Francis Xavier did signal work in converting people in Goa, Malacca, and Japan. But he died in 1552 on a small island near Macao before he could reach the mainland of China itself. Some of his followers carried on the work, converting many persons of importance at the imperial court and in the provinces, who protected the Christians by their influence.

**Japanese encroachment on China.** A third incursion from across the sea was the attempt of Japan to conquer Korea and China. In the latter part of the sixteenth century the powerful Japanese leader Hideyoshi warned the Koreans that he was planning to take all China. The Koreans replied that such a plan was like "a bee trying to sting a tortoise through its shell" or like "measuring the ocean in a cockleshell." Excellent Japanese armies landed in Korea, however, and won many battles against Korean and Chinese armies. Unlike the Sino-Japanese conflict of the twentieth century, the Japanese at that time did not control the sea lanes. Therefore, when the Korean sailors





*This is the hall of the throne in the Forbidden City at Peking. The carved stairway at the center of this palace, dating from the Ming dynasty, is a spirit staircase. An ordinary mortal must use the steps at the side.*

routed their fleets, using ironclad vessels, the Japanese were finally forced to withdraw.

**Fall of the Ming dynasty.** Although China and its Korean vassals under the Mings successfully withstood the Japanese invasion from the east, the Middle Kingdom fell victim to a new horde of invaders, the Manchus, who broke through the Great Wall in the north. Matters had become critical for the Mings when revolution broke out, and in 1644 a rebel leader had defeated the emperor's armies and captured Peking. The rebel leader soon fell a victim to the stronger Manchus, however, who in 1644 established their dynasty.

**Ming scholarship and art.** Ming means "brilliant," a word appropriate to the literary and artistic accomplishments of the period. Stimulus was given to scholarship when the traditional competitive examination system, which existed until 1905, was reestablished. Given every three years, these examinations were based upon a thorough knowledge of the classics, and their form and style followed

rigid rules. The examination system has preserved Chinese traditions remarkably, but it has kept China excessively conservative and intellectually sterile.

Ming craftsmen produced many works, but few as original as those of some earlier dynasties. They tried to duplicate the standards of the classic Sung pottery, but instead of emphasizing the beauty of the form of the vessel, they were more interested in brilliant coloring and elegant decoration. The Ming age is outstanding for its glazes and enamels, and for its blue and white "eggshell" porcelains. Cloisonné ware, an art popular during Byzantine days in the Near East, was popular in China during the Ming period. The art of the Ming dynasty is the best known of Chinese art but is by no means of so high a standard as earlier art. It turns to elegance and technical facility as opposed to simplicity and proportion.

The Forbidden City at Peking was constructed in the early part (1403-1424) of the Ming dynasty. With its series of courtyards, its

brilliant colored lacquer work, its tile, marble, and alabaster decorations, it is typical of a period of richly decorated architecture. In the throne hall, illustrated opposite, notice the

popular pagoda form and the beauty of proportion. The beauties of detail and color must be seen for a true appreciation of the richness of the building.

### *Japan's Voluntary Semi-Isolation (1542-1639)*

**E**uropean discovery of Japan. In a previous chapter the origins and evolution of the Japanese people through medieval times were briefly considered. Outstanding in that period of Nippon's development were its comparative isolation and sleepiness. Receiving its initial cultural impetus from China, the island kingdom continued along a path of comparatively little change. The same royal house ruled (as it still does), the country remained free from foreign attack except when the Mongols twice unsuccessfully attempted to conquer it, and generation after generation kept much the same social pattern.

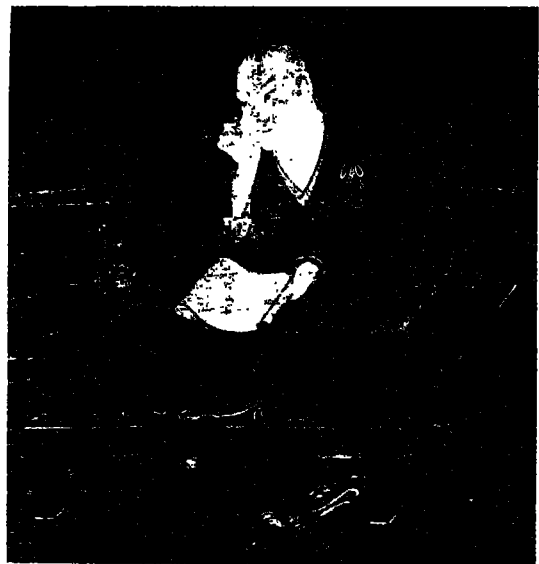
But Nippon was destined to have its complacent culture shaken by the coming of the foreigner. About 1542 three Portuguese sailors were driven off their course while sailing south from Macao to Siam, and came to one of the southern Japanese islands. It was not long before others visited the islands and began trading. The great Jesuit missionary, Francis Xavier, hearing about Japan after he had sailed from Lisbon in 1541, went there and started to convert the inhabitants. After Xavier's death, the work he inaugurated was carried on by successors. Within thirty years of Xavier's departure Japanese converts to Christianity numbered around 150,000.

**Medieval Japanese arts.** The period known as the Ashikaga (1392-1568) is famous for its arts and for its feudal system. A type of literature developed during the Ashikaga era was the classical drama known as *No*, in which masks of a highly decorative quality were used. The elaborately ornamented architecture of this period had lost the qualities of beauty and proportion characteristic of the earlier periods. Pictorial art flourished under the influence of China. Early in this period the famous color prints were developed. Many minor arts reached a high state of excellence after many centuries of development. The casting of bronze bells and mirrors, the making of porcelain, and the fashioning of bows, saddles, and swords were popular.

**Japanese society.** At this time people in

Japan lived in one of two extremes in society. The majority of the people lived in squalor and misery as a result of numerous civil wars, but the noble class whiled away its time following complex rituals for eating, drinking, dressing, and fighting. The tea ceremony was especially unusual, with its aim to instill in the devotee "urbanity, courtesy, purity, and imperturbability." Even soldiers were noted "teaists," and, as the scholar Nitobe points out, to be an "a-teaist" was as unforgivable then in Japan as to be an "a-theist" in England. It was an age in which militarists, not the emperor, controlled the empire. The head of a family was a *daimyo*, who gathered about him the *samurai*, "sworded men," who were supposed to live according to the chivalric *bushido*. A soldier who had no master became a *ronin*, or knight-errant, who fought for himself.

**Japanese expulsion of foreigners.** One of the greatest Japanese soldiers and statesmen was Hideyoshi (d. 1598). He put down brigandage, encouraged the arts, stimulated trade



A Kamakura Buddhist monk has removed his shoes to sit in contemplation at his writing table. Notice the writing brush in his hand and the ink vessel.

with China, and built splendid edifices in Kyoto and elsewhere. The dictator, himself of humble origin, rose to the top and was quite willing to employ commoners in his government if they possessed the requisite ability. Hideyoshi had few religious interests, but when told that Christian soldiers appeared after Christian missionaries, Hideyoshi persecuted the Jesuits and their converts.

Suspicion on the part of the Japanese rulers that Christianity was merely a cloak for political usurpation, the bigotry shown by many Christians where they had the upper hand in certain communities, and economic exploita-

tion on the part of various unscrupulous Portuguese merchants, all combined to cause the Japanese to banish the Christians from their country. Christianity was formally disallowed by an edict in 1614, and all foreign teachers were ordered deported. In 1639 the final expulsion was ordered in the edict: "For the future, let none, so long as the Sun illuminates the world, presume to sail to Japan, not even in the quality of ambassadors; and this declaration is never to be revoked on pain of death."<sup>6</sup> Except for a small, closely watched Dutch post at Nagasaki, the island was closed to intercourse with the west until 1853.

### *Summary.*

This chapter has briefly surveyed the great era of geographical expansion, which shifted Europe's axis from the Mediterranean to the Atlantic and saw such nations as Portugal, Spain, Holland, France, and England rise to power. To the New World these powers transplanted European culture, and great colonial empires were established.

European expansion eastward around Africa and into Asia proved just as important, but the results were not the same. The empires which Portugal, Holland, France, and England carved out were not based primarily on colonization, for Asia was far more populous than Europe. Rather, western domination of the east was secured by the establishment of strongly fortified settlements located at strategic sites, whence the better equipped Europeans could maintain economic and political control. The Europeans could not substitute their culture for the civilizations in India, China, and Japan. In fact, the east resisted European penetration of any kind, and it interpreted the piratical and intolerant acts of the westerners as reflecting a barbarous civilization in Europe.

The eastern attitude was in many ways justified. At a time when Europe was plunged into cruel religious wars, Akbar in India was doing much to make religious tolerance a reality. When the Portuguese dropped anchor at Canton, China was flourishing under the urbane leadership of the Mings, and scholarship and arts and crafts were assiduously cultivated. The island kingdom of Japan was also evolving a unique and rich culture.

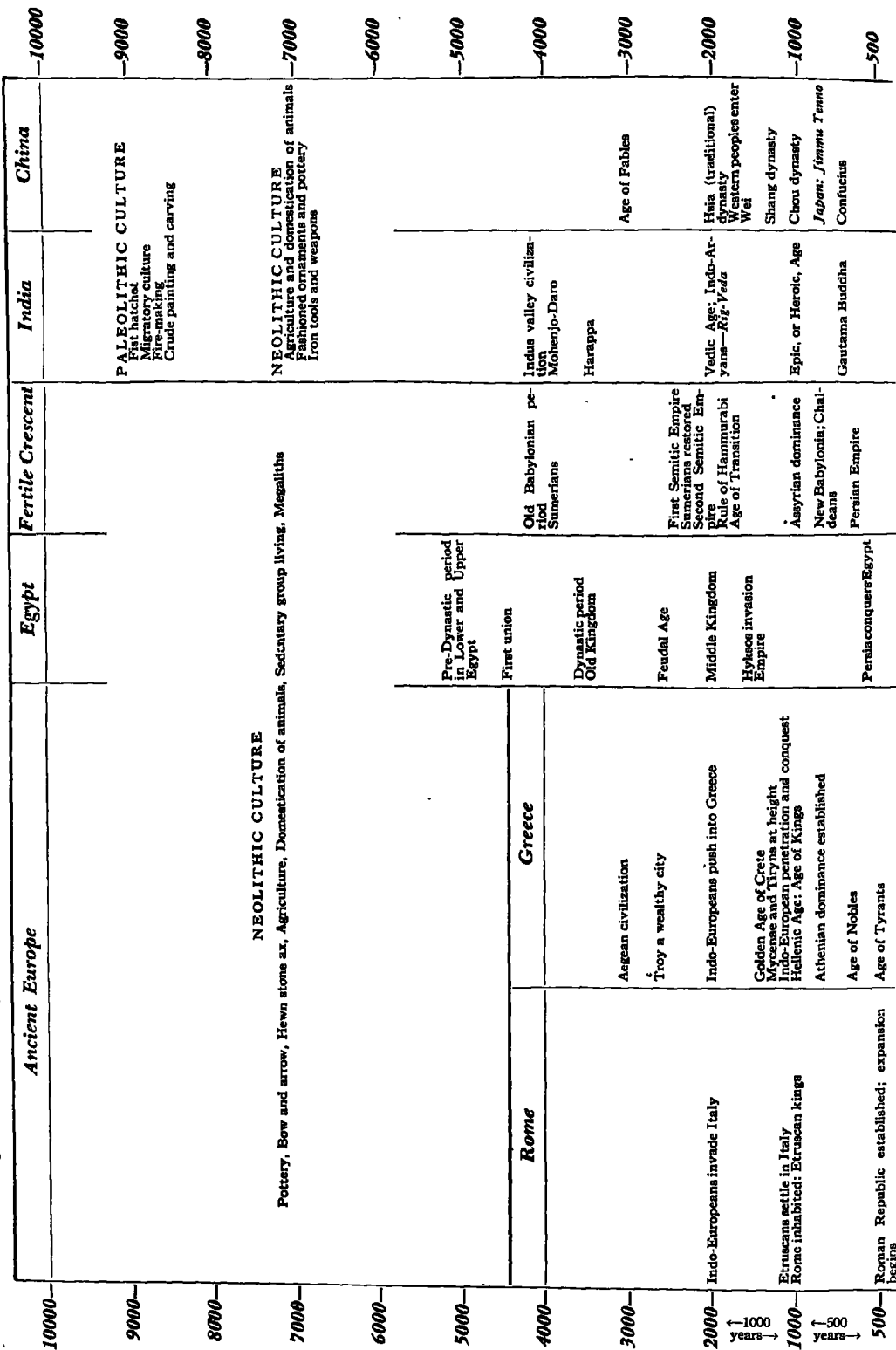
This chapter has recounted the conclusion of an important era in the world's history. Hitherto men everywhere had slowly and painfully built civilizations along the banks of rivers and around the shores of lakes and seas. While there had always been many contacts and borrowing of customs and institutions among the various centers of civilization, essentially each was isolated. In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries a new era in man's development opened. The ocean became a highway for the exchange of commerce and ideas. For the first time man obtained reasonably accurate concepts of the size and shape of the earth, as well as first-hand knowledge of its inhabitants. This knowledge was gathered only after much time and with infinite pains, but already a new day had dawned for man—he had circled the globe and made it his possession.

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# Chart of Contemporary Events

Occasional reference to this chart from the chronological tables at the head of each chapter will indicate the parallelism of events throughout the world.



Rome	Greece	Egypt	Fertile Crescent	India	China
500— ↑ 18 ↓ 400—	Age of Democracy Decline of Hellenic culture			Magadha Empire	
300— Hortensian Law Punic Wars	Hellenistic Age begins; Alexander establishes Empire Alexander's Empire divided; Antigonos	Alexander conquers Egypt	Alexander conquers Persia	Alexander invades India Maurya dynasty	—300 End of Chou dynasty Ch'in dynasty Han dynasty
200— Rome triumphant in Mediterranean world Transition from Republic to Empire Gracchi reforms fail Rise of dictators: Marius, Sulla; Cicero	Rome conquers Greece	Ptolemies rule Egypt	Seleucids rule Crescent	Reign of Asoka Andhra dynasty in Deccan	—200 Ssu-ma Ch'ien's <i>Historical Record</i>
100— Rise of Julius Caesar Octavian establishes Principate Augustan Age: Virgil, Horace, Livy, Ovid The Julian Caesars: Seneca, Tacitus, Plutarch	<i>Early Christianity</i> Life of Christ Conversion of Paul	Egypt under Rome	Crescent under Rome		—100 Buddhism arrives Invention of paper
0— The Flavians The Antonines: height of imperial power		Alexandria an important commercial center	Thriving cities; extensive trade	Kushan Empire	—0 —100
100— The Dominate Period of Civil Wars; invasion	Persecution at height Christianity dominant throughout Empire Edict of Milan; Christianity legalized Council of Nicaea Decline and end of pagan religion Growth of monasticism	<i>Byzantine Empire</i> Founding of Constantinople Eastern Empire established			—200 Age of Chaos Poetry by the Seven Sages
200— Reorganization: Diocletian, Constantine Founding of Constantinople Joint rule: Rome and Constantinople Great Germanic invasions Permanent division of Empire				Great Age of Guptas Chandragupta II Period of confusion	—300 —400
300— Fall of Rome					—500



Medieval Europe					Byzantine Empire	Mohammedan Expansion	India	China (Japan)
500	Clovis founds Frankish Empire St. Benedict founds monastery at Monte Cassino				Reign of Justinian; Belisarius Codification of Roman Law		Invasion by Belisarius Chalukya dynasty in Deccan	Japan: <i>Ruddhim ar-ries</i>
600	Pope Gregory I checks Lombards; sends mission to Anglo-Saxons Isidore of Seville writes <i>Etymologies</i>				Period of decline Greek replaces Latin	Life of Mohammed Islam over Arabia and Near East	Harsha reunites northern India First Mohammedan invasion Age of Rajputs	Golden Age of T'angs Japan: <i>Great Reform "Warrior Empress"</i>
700	The Venerable Bede writes <i>Ecclesiastical History of the English People</i> Battle of Tours				Reign of Leo III Iconoclastic controversy	Omniad dynasty: empire from Atlantic to India and Central Asia Mohammedans checked at Tours		Japan: <i>Nara period</i> Hsuan Tsung, "Brilliant Emperor"
800	Pepin founds Carolingian dynasty Reign of Charlemagne crowned Emperor by Pope Disolution of Frankish Empire; Treaty of Verdun Invasion of the Northmen				Empire on defensive against Mohammedans	Abbasid dynasty: autonomous states Harsh relations with Charlemagne		Japan: <i>Heian period</i>
900	Feudalism established Otto crowned Emperor of Holy Roman Empire						Chola Kingdom	Five Little Ages Sung dynasty
1000	Edward the Confessor Battle of Hastings William I Henry I				Reign of Hugh Capet	Norman conquest of Sicily		Tatar invasions Culmination of Chinese art
1100	Louis le Gros					Roger II of Sicily Lombard League founded		
1150	Henry II Richard the Lion-Hearted: Third Crusade				Philip Augustus: Third Crusade		Mohammedan conquests Mohammed Ghori in lower India; Punjab	Japan: <i>Yoritomo dictator</i> Invasions by Genghis Khan
1200						Hohenstaufen rule Frederick Barbarossa: Third Crusade		

German States	Italian States	Spain	France	England
		Caliphate of Cordova ends	Reign of Hugh Capet	Edward the Confessor
		Toledo falls		Battle of Hastings William I
Pope humbles Henry IV at Canossa			Louis le Gros	Henry I
		Ordinances of Leon		Henry II
			Philip Augustus: Third Crusade	Richard the Lion-Hearted: Third Crusade

England	France	Spain	Italian States	German States	Mohammedan Expansion	India	China (Japan)
1200 Magna Charta Henry III		Mohammedans defeated		Hanseatic League	Later crusades	Mohammedan power increases	Japan: Hei'jo period
1250 Founding of Parliament	Papacy at Avignon House of Valois	Moors confined to Granada	"Sicilian Vespers" Early Renaissance	Frederick II	End of crusades		
1300 BEGINNING OF HUNDRED YEARS' WAR				Rudolf of Hapsburg		Mohammedans end rule of Hindus	Mongol dynasty Kublai Khan Marco Polo
1350				Golden Bull			
1400 Peasants' Revolt	GREAT SCHISM IN THE CHURCH Portugal gains independence				Rise of Ottoman Turks	Invasion by Tamerlane	Ming dynasty Code of the Great Ming
1450 Wars of the Roses Henry VII	Joan of Arc	Castile and Aragon united	Machiavelli writes <i>The Prince</i>	Gutenberg prints Bible	Fall of Constantinople and Byzantine Empire to Ottoman Turks		
1500 Henry VIII breaks with Rome	MARTIN LUTHER AND THE RELIGIOUS REVOLT Charles V		French invasions High Renaissance	Peasants' Revolt League of Schmalkalden		Mogul Empire	Portuguese reach Canton
1550 Birth of Shakespeare	THE COUNTER REFORMATION Philip II			Peace of Augsburg		Portuguese control trade Babur sultan of Hindustan	
1600 Queen Elizabeth War with Spain: Armada James I	Catholics versus Huguenots Henry IV	War with England: Armada Philip III				Reign of Akbar	Japan fails to conquer China
1648 Charles I Civil Wars: Cromwell	Absolution firmly established	Period of Spanish decline	Complete disunification			Rule of Shah Jahan	Japan excludes foreigners Mancchu dynasty
	BEGINNING OF THIRTY YEARS' WAR						
	PEACE OF WESTPHALIA						

# Tables of Cultural History

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# For Further Reading

*A list of books, classified and annotated, for further information or leisure reading.*

## 1: The Universe, the Earth, and Man

**1. Government and Politics:** R. H. Lowie, *Primitive Society* (1920), a standard work. See especially Chapters 13 and 14. H. I. Hogbin, *Law and Order in Polynesia* (1934) explains how primitive society enforces its rules.

**2. Economics:** Clark Wissler, *An Introduction to Social Anthropology* (1929), Chapter 4, "The Economic Base," a good outline of economic activities. G. G. Brown and A. M. Bruce Hutt, *Anthropology in Action* (1935), pp. 120-165, an easily understood survey of land tenure, farming methods, crafts of contemporary African tribes.

**3. Social Life and Customs:** P. Schmidt Emerson, Editor, *Man and Society* (1937), Chapter 3, a readable and scholarly discussion of social structure of primitive people. Margaret Mead, *Coming of Age in Samoa* (1928) has numerous fascinating discussions of marriage and family relations.

**4. Religion:** James G. Frazer, *The Golden Bough, a Study in Magic and Religion* (1907-1915), a classic discussion. See Volumes I-III, "Magic and Religion," and material on taboos. G. H. Luquet, *The Art and Religion of Fossil Man* (1930), Part II, a good introduction to subject, illustrated.

**5. Thought and Education:** Habits of thought of the primitive mind are discussed in Paul Radin, *Primitive Man as Philosopher* (1927), and A. A. Goldenweiser, *Early Civilization* (1922), Part III. A vivid picture of the training of the young is found in Margaret Mead, *Growing Up in New Guinea* (1930). See also Mead, *Coming of Age in Samoa* (1928), Chapter 3, "The Education of the Samoan Child."

**6. Esthetic Activities:** Luquet, cited above, is suitable for the general reader and is beautifully illustrated. See Part I. George Grant MacCurdy, *Human Origins: A Manual of Prehistory*, 2 volumes (1924), has a noteworthy ac-

count on art in Chapter 7. Discussions of all phases of the culture of primitive groups may be found in Gontran de Poncins, *Kabloona* (1941), and W. L. Warner, *A Black Civilization* (1937). G. P. Murdock, *Our Primitive Contemporaries* (1936) discusses numerous primitive cultures.

**7. Other References:** A. PRE-LITERATE HISTORY. Authoritative yet non-technical accounts of paleolithic and neolithic development may be found in A. L. Kroeber, *Anthropology* (1923), Chapters 6 and 14, and H. F. Cleland, *Our Prehistoric Ancestors* (1928).

B. THE NATURE OF THE UNIVERSE. A good non-technical introduction is found in H. H. Newman, Editor, *The Nature of the World and of Man* (1927). For the origin of the earth see E. B. Branson and W. A. Tarr, *Introduction to Geology* (1935), Chapters 16 and 17.

C. CULTURE: meaning and significance. A good general account in James H. S. Bossard, *Man and His World* (1932), Chapters 30-33. Clark Wissler, *Man and Culture* (1923), a classic work. See Chapter 5, "The Universal Pattern," and Chapter 7, "The Spread of Culture."

D. THE MEANING OF EVOLUTION. An easily understood discussion in S. J. Holmes, *An Introduction to General Biology* (1926), Chapters 16 and 17.

E. RACE. Lothrop Stoddard, *The Rising Tide of Color* (1920), a famous exposition of the theory of Nordic superiority. See also Wilson D. Wallis, *An Introduction to Sociology* (1933), Chapter 10.

F. HISTORY. P. Schmidt Emerson, cited above, Chapter 7, "History," discusses the meaning, scope, and tools of history.

G. LEISURE READING. Johannes V. Jensen, *Fire and Ice* (1923), an historical narrative of prehistoric times by a well-known Danish novelist.

## 2: The Nile, the Tigris, and the Euphrates

**1. Government and Politics:** Material on the structure of the Egyptian empire may be found in *The Cambridge Ancient History*, edited by J. A. Bury, S. A. Cook, and F. E. Adcock (1923-27), Volume II, Chapters 3, 4, and 8; on Assyrian methods of war in Volume III, pp. 99 and following; on Persian imperial rule in Volume IV, pp. 184-201. See Morris Jastrow, *The Civilization of Babylonia and Assyria* (1915), Chapter 4, for a description of the Code of Hammurabi. The conquests of the great pharaoh, Thutmose III, are described in H. R. Hall, *Ancient History of the Near East*, 8th edition (1932), pp. 276-297.

**2. Economics:** See Morris Jastrow, cited above, Chapter 6, for a treatment of law and commerce. L. J. Delaporte, *Mesopotamia, the Babylonian and Assyrian Civilizations* (1925), Chapter 3, contains a survey of Babylonian industry and business. Arts and crafts are described in James Baikie, *A Century of Excavation in the Lands of the Pharaohs* (1929), Chapter 8. C. L. Woolley, *The Sumerians* (1928), pp. 90-193, pictures the economic and social life of the Sumerians. J. H. Breasted, *History of Egypt* (1909) makes numerous references to economic conditions. See, for example, the discussion of agriculture during the Old Kingdom, pp. 92-98.

**3. Social Life and Customs:** The following afford much information on this topic: W. M. F. Petrie, *Social Life in Ancient Egypt* (1924); Morris Jastrow, cited above; and A. W. Shorter, *Everyday Life in Ancient Egypt* (1932).

**4. Religion:** Lewis Browne, *This Believing World* (1926), a popularly written religious history valuable for an introductory survey. See sections on Babylonians, Egyptians, Zoroastrianism, and Judaism.

**5. Thought and Education:** Babylonian science is described in *The Cambridge Ancient History*, Volume III, pp. 237-242. See W. T. Sedgwick and H. W. Tyler, *A Short History of Science*, revised edition (1939), Chapter 2, "Science Begins in the East." Victor Robinson, *The Story of Medicine* (1932), Chapter 2, offers interesting information on Egyptian medicine.

**6. Esthetic Activities:** Sheldon Cheney, *A World History of Art* (1937), Chapters 1 and 2, well-written, non-technical discussion of art in the ancient Near East. Helen Gardner, *Art*

*Through the Ages* (1926), Chapters 3 and 4, covers the same ground in an equally simple but engaging fashion. In Jean Capart, *Lectures on Egyptian Art* (1928), Chapters 6-9, the material on architecture is especially good. For Egyptian literature consult Adolf Erman, *The Literature of the Ancient Egyptians* (1927). Assyrian learning, art, and literature are surveyed in A. T. Olmstead, *History of Palestine and Syria* (1931), pp. 489-503, 555-572.

**7. General Surveys:** J. H. Breasted, *Ancient Times* (1935), the best introductory account, profusely illustrated; W. E. Caldwell, *The Ancient World* (1937), a good general history, discussing literature and economic and social development as well as politics; M. I. Rostovtzeff, *A History of the Ancient World*, 2 volumes (1930), an outstanding work notable for broad treatment of historical themes, with exceptionally good illustrations; H. R. Hall, cited above, a standard and comprehensive work.

**8. Historical Studies of Specific Civilizations:** J. H. Breasted, *History of Egypt* (1909), well illustrated, pleasing style, work of a famous Egyptologist; R. W. Rogers, *History of Ancient Persia* (1929); J. Garstang, *The Land of the Hittites* (1929), Chapter 2, an interesting account of Anatolian history; A. T. Olmstead, cited above, material on ancient Hebrews especially good; C. Huart, *Ancient Persia and Iranian Civilization* (1927).

**9. Other References:** E. Chiera, *They Wrote on Clay* (1938) is a fascinating volume. Typical chapter headings: "Ancient ABC's," "Leaves from a Diplomat's Diary," and "The World of Business." Mesopotamia lives again in this book. Another volume similar in character is R. V. D. Magoffin and E. C. Davis, *Magi. Spades* (1929). Read, for example, the account of the discovery of Tutankhamen's tomb, pp. 43-71.

**10. Historical Novels:** W. S. Davis, *Belshazzar*, a story of the Persian conquest of Babylon; Dmitri Merezhovsky, *Birth of the Gods*; and Akhnaton, *King of Egypt* together form one narrative of life in ancient Crete and Egypt; Georg Ebers, *Uarda*, a story of Egypt in the 14th century B.C.; Thomas Mann, *Joseph and His Brothers*, *Young Joseph*, and *Joseph in Egypt*, 2 volumes, a notable Biblical theme fictionalized by a great German novelist.



### 3: *The Indus and the Ganges*

**1. Government and Politics:** A technical work is U. N. Ghoshal, *A History of Hindu Political Theories*, 2nd edition (1927). See pages 1-74. For government in the heroic age see N. K. Sidhanta, *The Heroic Age of India* (1930), pp. 170-193.

**2. Economics:** See R. K. Mookerji, *The Foundations of Indian Economics* (1916). For the economic basis of Dravidian culture see Gilbert Slater, *The Dravidian Element in Indian Culture* (1924), pp. 118-146.

**3. Social Life and Customs:** A good treatment of the social life of the Indus valley and early Indo-Aryan peoples can be found in R. K. Mookerji, *Hindu Civilization* (1936), pp. 7-119. N. K. Sidhanta, cited above, pp. 114-168, makes a strong case for comparing the heroic ages of India and Greece. The caste system is well analyzed in Stanley Rice, *Hindu Customs and Their Origins* (1937). An enjoyable summary of Indian social origins can be gleaned from Will Durant, *Story of Civilization* (1935), Volume I, Chapter 17. The status of women in this period is summarized in A. S. Altekar, *The Position of Women in Hindu Civilization* (1938), pp. 404-415.

**4. Religion:** See R. K. Mookerji, *Hindu Civilization* (1936), pp. 243-271, for a good résumé of the life and teachings of Gautama Buddha. Jainism is discussed, pp. 227-243. Indian religious thought is surveyed in Will Durant, cited above, Chapter 18. For a more scholarly interpretation there is recommended Arthur B. Keith, *The Religion and Philosophy of the Veda and Upanishads*, 2 volumes (1925), while source material can be found directly in R. E. Hume, Editor, *The Thirteen Principal Upanishads* (1921). For Hindu scriptures also see R. O. Ballou, Editor, *The Bible of the World* (1939), pp. 3-178. For Buddhist scriptures see pp. 242-340.

**5. Thought and Education:** Indo-Aryan literature is well portrayed in E. W. Hopkins,

*Great Epics of India* (1920), and A. A. Macdonell, *A History of Sanskrit Literature* (1920). Indian literature is criticized in Herbert H. Gowen, *A History of Indian Literature* (1931). For the Vedas see pp. 45-77, the *Mahabharata*, pp. 205-237, and the *Ramayana*, pp. 241-253.

**6. Esthetic Activities:** A good introduction to Indian art and its underlying philosophy is found in Sheldon Cheney, *A World History of Art* (1937), Chapters 8 and 10. Good, brief summaries are also in Helen Gardner, *Art Through the Ages* (1936), Chapter 25, and Raymond S. Stites, *The Arts and Man* (1940). A brief account of early Indian architecture and its evolution is found in Talbot Hamlin, *Architecture Through the Ages* (1940), pp. 399-406. Students of music will appreciate E. Clements' short *Introduction to the Study of Indian Music* (1913), with his interesting development of ancient Indian musical theory.

**7. General Surveys:** Perhaps the best single treatment of Indian civilization is H. G. Rawlinson, *India: A Short Cultural History* (1938), Chapters 1-3. An introduction to the history of the period is V. A. Smith, *Early History of India* (1914), pp. 1-48, and *The Cambridge Shorter History of India* (1934), Chapter 1, will also prove informative. Essays on the philosophy, science, art, and society of India will be found in *The Legacy of India*, edited by Geoffrey T. Garratt (1937).

**8. Other References:** Excellent pictures and the most authoritative account of the Indus valley culture are in Sir John H. Marshall, Editor, *Mohenjo-daro and the Indus Civilization*, 3 volumes (1931). The importance of the Dravidians in the racial and cultural pattern of early India is discussed in Gilbert Slater, cited above. Sir Edwin Arnold provides a biographical account of the Buddha together with a summary of his philosophy in the poem *The Light of Asia* (1925).

### 4: *The Wei and the Hwang Ho*

**1. Government and Politics:** See E. D. Thomas, *Chinese Political Thought* (1927), Chapter 4, "The State," Chapter 5, "The Origin of the State," Chapter 8, "The Art of Government," Chapter 9, "The Emperor," Chapter 16, "Early Political Theory in Practice."

**2. Economics:** M. P. Lee, *Economic History of China* (1921) is particularly concerned with agriculture, and translations of original sources comprise most of the book. For the period under discussion see Part I, Chapter 2, and Part II, Chapters 1-3.

**3. Social Life and Customs:** See E. S. Bogardus, *The Development of Social Thought* (1940), Chapter 5; and Will Durant, *The Story of Civilization* (1935), Volume I, Chapter 26, pp. 760-802. Herrlee Glessner Creel, *The Birth of China* (1936) is also useful for the light it throws on social conditions. Edward T. Williams, *China, Yesterday and Today* (1932) discusses the family in Chapter 3; marriage and status of the family, Chapter 4; the village, Chapter 6; and the city, Chapter 7.

**4. Religion:** A scholarly work about an interesting phase of Chinese religious development is John K. Shryock, *The Origin and Development of the State Cult of Confucius* (1932). A brief account of the rise of Chinese religious thought, with emphasis on Lao-tse, is A. B. Keith, "Rising Religions of the Farther East," *Universal World History*, edited by J. A. Hammerton (1939), Chapter 31, pp. 599-616.

**5. Thought and Education:** Vivid descriptions of the chief Chinese philosophers are found in Will Durant, *Story of Philosophy* (1927), Volume I, Chapter 23. Excerpts from the teachings of Lao-tse and Confucius are to be found in Robert O. Ballou, Editor, *The Bible of the World* (1939). For Lao-tse see pp. 471-505; for Confucius, pp. 379-428. For a discussion of the evolution of literature during the feudal period see Herbert A. Giles, *A History of Chinese Literature* (1931), pp. 3-74. The dim origins and development of Chinese medicine are discussed in Edward H. Hume, *The Chinese Way in Medicine* (1940), Chapter 3.

**6. Esthetic Activities:** Sheldon Cheney, *A World History of Art* (1937), Chapter 9, pp. 277-298, gives a brief but interesting analysis of Chinese art-philosophy. Another brief account is to be found in Helen Gardner, *Art Through the Ages* (1936), Chapter 26, pp. 605-634. A well-illustrated and simply written his-

tory of Chinese art is G. S. de Morant, *A History of Chinese Art* (1931). See Chapters 1 and 2, pp. 29-71, for accounts of the art of this early period. Laurence Binyon and others, *The Romance of Chinese Art* (1936) is more concerned with later periods; however, it is helpful for an over-all picture and is simply written, with chapters on such topics as painting, bronze and brass ornamental work (especially good for the pre-Chou and Chou periods). The religious significance of jade and the types of ritual jade are discussed in Una Pope-Hennessy's handsomely illustrated *Early Chinese Jades* (1923), Chapters 1-4. An account of the history and significance of Chinese bronzes is found in John C. Ferguson, *Survey of Chinese Art* (1939), Chapter 1. Also see Chapter 5, "Jades." This work is beautifully illustrated.

**7. General Surveys:** A splendid one-volume work merging the political and cultural history of China is C. P. Fitzgerald, *China, A Short Cultural History* (1938). A reliable source for the period covered in this chapter is Friedrich Hirth, *The Ancient History of China to the End of the Chou Dynasty* (1923). Also recommended are H. G. Creel, *The Birth of China* (1936), with its excellent accounts of society in the Shang and Chou dynasties, and the same author's *Studies in Early Chinese Culture*, First Series (1937).

**8. Other References:** For the student interested in archaeology, Johan Gunnar Andersson, *Children of the Yellow Earth: Studies in Prehistoric China* (1934) is recommended. Lin Yutang, *My Country and My People* (1935) is an evaluation of Chinese culture, largely from the standpoint of a critic sympathetic to Confucius. Chapter 2 gives a biographical sketch of the philosopher. Pearl Buck's well-known novel, *The Good Earth* (1931) deals with modern times, but it throws much light on the temperament of the Chinese people.

## 5: The City-States of Greece

**1. Government and Politics:** A concise account of Greek political thought is found in A. E. Zimmern's essay in *The Legacy of Greece*, edited by R. W. Livingstone (1923). Also see Zimmern, *The Greek Commonwealth: Politics and Economics in Fifth-Century Athens*, 4th edition (1924), Part II, pp. 213-249.

**2. Economics:** For knowledge about the

evolution of currency see Percy Gardner, *History of Ancient Coinage, 700-300 B.C.* (1918). The economic practices and standards of Athens are studied in G. M. Calhoun, *The Business Life of Ancient Athens* (1926). A short but satisfactory study of Greek commerce is found in *Universal World History*, edited by J. A. Hammerton (1939), Chapter 42.

**3. Social Life and Customs:** For information about home life and the status of women see G. Lowes Dickinson, *The Greek View of Life* (1915), Chapter 3. A comprehensive study of conditions can be found in Gustave Glotz, *Ancient Greece at Work* (1926), Part I, Chapters 1-3; Part II, Chapter 2; Part III, Chapters 3-5. For a brief, enjoyable account of Athens in the age of Pericles see J. H. Breasted, *The Conquest of Civilization* (1938), Chapter 15.

**4. Religion:** Dickinson, cited above, Chapter 1, pp. 1-66, deals with the religious life, while the classical stories about the Greek gods are recounted in W. S. Fox, *Greek and Roman Mythology* (1916). W. R. Inge has contributed an analysis of Greek religion in *The Legacy of Greece*, cited above, pp. 25-56.

**5. Thought and Education:** An analysis Aristotle's philosophy is found in W. D. Aristotle, 3rd edition (1937). See "Life and Works," pp. 1-19, and "Biology," pp. 112-128. There is a good discussion of Plato in B. A. G. Fuller, *A History of Philosophy* (1938), Volume I, pp. 68-102. Especially recommended is the "Phaedo" in *The Dialogues of Plato*, translated by B. Jowett, 3rd edition (1937), Volume I, pp. 441-501. Greek science is discussed briefly in W. T. Sedgwick and H. W. Tyler, *Short History of Science* (1917), Chapters 4-6, while *The Legacy of Greece*, cited above, can be used for essays on mathematics and astronomy, pp. 97-136, biology, pp. 163-200, and medicine, pp. 261-248. Translations of Greek poetry, including selections from Sappho, Aeschylus, Sophocles, Euripides, and Aristophanes, will be found in *An Anthology of World Poetry*, edited by Mark Van Doren (1936), pp. 252-328. For short descriptions of Greek literature and the theater see *The*

*Legacy of Greece*, pp. 249-288, and *Universal World History*, Chapter 34. The student will find it well worth while to look into Thucydides, *History of the Peloponnesian Wars*, translated and edited by B. Jowett (1900).

**6. Esthetic Activities:** Hellenic architecture is described and illustrated in Talbot Hamlin, *Architecture Through the Ages* (1940), pp. 111-131; Hellenistic architecture, pp. 132-140. Also see Sir Banister Fletcher, *A History of Architecture* (1931), pp. 65-128. Greek art is discussed in Sheldon Cheney, *A World History of Art* (1937), pp. 137-212. Also see *The Legacy of Greece*, pp. 353-396, 397-424, and *Universal World History*, Chapter 33.

**7. General Surveys:** For a survey of Aegean life see James Baikie, *The Sea Kings of Crete* (1920), and A. J. B. Wace, "Troy: Its Place in Literature and History," *Universal World History*, Chapter 22. For a good political history of the Hellenic period see J. B. Bury, *A History of Greece to the Death of Alexander the Great* (1913). An excellent cultural history is that by G. W. Botsford and C. A. Robinson, *Hellenic History* (1939). Also consult Wallace E. Caldwell, *The Ancient World* (1937), Chapters 6-16. Two scholarly references for the Hellenistic period are M. Cary, *The Legacy of Alexander* (1932), and W. W. Tarn, *Hellenistic Civilization* (1930).

**8. Other References:** Greek classics in literature, philosophy, and history are available in countless editions. The student will find it advantageous to examine C. M. Bakewell, *Source Book in Ancient Philosophy* (1907); Plato's "Republic" in *The Dialogues of Plato*, cited above, Volume I, pp. 591-879; the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* of Homer; Plutarch's *Lives*; and Herodotus' *History*.

## 6: Pax Romana

**1. Government and Politics:** A detailed account of administration is given in *The Legacy of Rome*, edited by Cyril Bailey (1923), pp. 91-140. In the same volume, pp. 173-208, there is a good discussion of Roman law. For the process of conquest see J. C. Stobart, *The Grandeur That Was Rome*, 2nd edition (1920), Chapter 2. For Roman military methods see H. M. D. Parker, *Roman Legions* (1928).

**2. Economics:** In H. W. Johnston, *The Private Life of the Romans*, revised edition (1932), Chapter 11, income and means of living

are discussed. W. Warde Fowler, *Social Life at Rome in the Age of Cicero* (1922), pp. 60-96, has a good treatment of men in business. A brief general account of the economic structure of the Roman world is given in Herbert Heaton, *Economic History of Europe* (1936), Chapter 4.

**3. Social Life and Customs:** W. S. McDaniel, *Roman Private Life and Its Survivals* (1924), interesting brief chapters on such topics as furniture, amusements, and street life. See also "The House of the Rich Man" and "The

Daily Life of the Well-To-Do" in W. Warde Fowler cited above, pp. 237-284. Portraits of characteristic Roman types are given in Grant Showerman, *Rome and the Romans* (1931), pp. 151-202. In these pages we find the Roman senator, lawyer, voter, and teacher.

4. **Religion:** *The Legacy of Rome*, cited above, pp. 237-264, gives a convenient summary. Other good sources are Fowler, cited above, pp. 319-352, and Albert Grenier, *The Roman Spirit* (1926), Part I, Chapter 4.

5. **Thought and Education:** A readable summary of Roman science is given in Sedgwick and Tyler, *A Short History of Science* (1917), Chapter 7. *The Legacy of Rome* also has a résumé of science, pp. 265-324. For education see Johnston, cited above, Chapter 4, and Fowler, cited above, pp. 168-203.

6. **Esthetic Activities:** *The Legacy of Rome* may be consulted for art, pp. 385-448, and literature, pp. 325-350. A survey of Roman literature is given in Ford Madox Ford, *The March of Literature from Confucius' to Our Own* (1938), pp. 163-278. For the Roman drama see J. R. Taylor, *The Story of the Drama* (1930), pp. 193-241. A good account of Roman art and architecture is given in R. S. Stiles, *The Arts and Man* (1940), Chapter 10.

7. **General Surveys:** One of the best general treatments is Albert A. Trever, *History of Ancient Civilization* (1936), Volume II. A simple summary of Roman history is found in J. H. Breasted, *Ancient Times*, 2nd edition (1935), pp. 513-742. An excellent treatment of

Roman economic history is Frank Tenney, *An Economic History of Rome*, 2nd edition (1927).

8. **Other References:** A. BIOGRAPHY. For Marcus Aurelius see "The Philosopher on the Throne," in Grant Showerman, *Monuments and Men of Ancient Rome* (1935), Chapters 34 and 35; the British statesman and author John Buchan has written an interesting treatment of Caesar in *Julius Caesar* (1932); H. Taylor, *Cicero* (1916); G. P. Baker, *Augustus* (1937) and *Hannibal* (1929) are also recommended.

B. POMPEII. The story of its destruction, excavation, and discoveries may be read in R. C. Carrington, *Pompeii* (1936).

C. ROME. The burial and later excavation of ancient Rome is interestingly treated in Showerman, *Monuments and Men of Ancient Rome*, cited above, Chapters 4-5.

D. ETRUSCANS. Their influence on Italy is shown in D. Randall-McIver, *The Etruscans* (1927), Chapter 9.

9. **Historical Novels:** Naomi Mitchison, *The Conquered*, about the Roman conquest of Gaul; Gustave Flaubert, *Salammbô* centers around Carthage about 240 B.C.; the English novelist Robert Graves has two well-written historical narratives in *I, Claudius* and *Claudius the God, and His Wife Messalina*; the famous Spanish writer Blasco Ibáñez has an interesting tale in *Sonnica*, a story of Rome in the period of Hannibal; the Second Punic War forms the background for A. H. Gilkes, *Kallistratus*.

## 7: Interval in the West

1. **The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire:** Carl Stephenson, *Medieval History* (1935), Chapter 1, "The Decline of the Ancient World." E. M. Hulme, *The Middle Ages* (1929), Chapters 1 and 2, presents a brief and clear picture of the empire in the fourth century and its decay. The last phase of the empire is also discussed in Clarence Perkins, *Ancient History* (1936), Chapter 29. The late Professor J. W. Thompson discusses the Roman empire and the various reasons advanced for its fall in *An Economic and Social History of the Middle Ages* (1928), Chapter 1.

2. **Early Medieval History:** G. B. Adams presents a valuable interpretation of the rise of the Franks in *Civilization During the Middle Ages* (1922), Chapter 7. The Germanic in-

vasions, new kingdoms, and the Age of the Carolingians are topics discussed in Carl Stephenson, cited above, Chapters 3, 7, and 8, and in J. W. Thompson and E. N. Johnson, *An Introduction to Medieval Europe* (1937), Chapters 4, 5, and 9. France, Britain, and Italy in the sixth century are surveyed in an interesting manner in E. S. Duckett, *The Gateway to the Middle Ages* (1938), Chapters 1, 4, and 7. The general period of transition from classical to medieval civilization is treated fully and in a scholarly way in F. Lot, *The End of the Ancient World* (1931).

3. **Christianity:** G. B. Adams, cited above, discusses the significance of Christianity in medieval history, Chapter 3. A clear and interesting survey of the rise of Christianity is

given by R. W. Collins, *A History of Medieval Civilization* (1936), Chapter 3. A detailed and standard account is S. J. Case, *Evolution of Early Christianity* (1914). The early history of monasticism in Europe is found in Duckett, cited above, Chapter 10, "Saint Benedict of Nursia." The following studies of Christ, non-technical in nature, will be found interesting: Giovanni Papini, *Life of Christ* (1923), and Emil Ludwig, *The Son of Man* (1928). The development of church organization, treated by an eminent American church historian, is found in A. C. Flick, *The Rise of the Medieval Church* (1909).

**4. Other References:** A good discussion of Cassiodorus is given in Duckett, cited above, Chapter 2. The best introduction to Charlemagne is the biography by his friend Einhard, *Life of Charlemagne*, translated by S. E. Turner (1915). The life and customs of the Germanic tribes are well portrayed by E. M.

Hulme, *The Middle Ages* (1938), Chapter 8.

**5. Historical Novels:** The life and times of Rome at its fall and Europe in early medieval days are depicted in the following novels: Henry Van Dyke, *The Other Wise Man*, Persia, Palestine, and Egypt at the beginning of the Christian Era; E. A. Abbott, *Philochristus: Memoirs of a Disciple of Christ*, the supposed narrative of a Galilean, a follower of Christ; Lew Wallace, *Ben Hur*, Syria in the time of Christ, a well-known novel full of dramatic events; Donn Byrne, *Brother Saul*, a fictional study of the great apostle; H. Sienkiewicz, *Quo Vadis*, a story of imperial Rome and Christian martyrdom; Felix Dahn, *Felicitas*, Germanic invasions in the Danube area; A. J. Church and Ruth Putnam, *The Count of the Saxon Shore*, southern Britain in the fifth century; D. Merezhkovsky, *The Death of the Gods*, fourth-century Europe as seen in the life of the emperor Julian.

## 8: Crossroads of the World

**1. Government and Politics:** For further knowledge of the legal organization of the Byzantine empire see John H. Wigmore, *A Panorama of the World's Legal Systems* (1936), Chapter 9. Highly specialized accounts of certain administrative posts are portrayed in A. E. R. Boak and J. E. Dunlap, *Two Studies in Later Roman and Byzantine Administration* (1924).

**2. Economics:** A clearly presented study of Constantinople's economic life will be found in Prosper Boissonade, *Life and Work in Medieval Europe* (1927), Book I, Chapters 3-5, Book II, Chapter 11. Consult J. W. Thompson, *Economic and Social History of the Middle Ages* (1928), Chapters 6 and 14. Commerce is briefly discussed in Norman H. Baynes, *The Byzantine Empire* (1926), Chapter 13.

**3. Social Life and Customs:** See Norman H. Baynes, cited above, Chapter 2; Robert Byron, *The Byzantine Achievement* (1929), Chapter 10; and the essay by F. N. Pryce in the *Universal World History*, edited by J. A. Hamerton (1939), Chapter 76.

**4. Religion:** The many religious disputes of the early Church and their settlement at Nicaea and other councils is explained in Chapter 78 of the *Universal World History*.

**5. Thought and Education:** Short but worth-while summaries of Byzantine educa-

tion and literature are found in Baynes, cited above, Chapters 9 and 10. See also Chapter 14 of this work for the cultural indebtedness of the Slav world to Byzantium. For further information regarding scholarship and learning consult Steven Runciman, *Byzantine Civilization* (1933), Chapters 9 and 10.

**6. Esthetic Activities:** A comprehensive treatment of Byzantine art is found in Sir T. G. Jackson, *Byzantine and Romanesque Architecture*, 2 volumes (1920). It is copiously illustrated and the mosaics for which the empire was famous are here reproduced in color. A concise description of the architectural developments of the Byzantine empire is found in Talbot Hamlin, *Architecture Through the Ages* (1940), Chapter 11, pp. 225-239. For brief treatments of art see Sheldon Cheney, *A World History of Art* (1937), Chapter 11; Helen Gardner, *Art Through the Ages* (1936), Chapter 10; and Baynes, cited above, Chapter 11.

**7. General Surveys:** An excellent one-volume account of the Byzantine empire is Charles Diehl, *History of the Byzantine Empire* (1925). The founding of Constantinople and the reign of Justinian are recounted in Chapters 1 and 2. Another good work, with special emphasis on the social and cultural contributions of this civilization, is Steven Runciman, cited above,

while Robert Byron, cited above, stresses the fusion of Greek, Roman, and oriental strains in its culture. The works of J. B. Bury, *History of the Eastern Roman Empire*, 2 volumes (1912), and *History of the Later Roman Empire*, 2 volumes (1923), are scholarly accounts of the political history of Constantinople throughout its entire history.

8. **Other References:** In Charles Diehl, *Byzantine Portraits* (1927) there are good essays of a biographical nature. Two especially are

recommended: "Life of a Byzantine Empress," which gives an insight into the status of the consort of the emperor, and, "Theodora," the wife of Justinian. The serious student will find it worth while to dip into the actual writings of the Byzantine historian Procopius, *History of the Wars*, translated by H. B. Dewing, 5 volumes (1915). Procopius is indispensable as a source for events in the reign of Justinian. Robert Graves, *Count Belisarius* (1938) is an historical novel about Justinian's general.

## 9: Allah Akbar!

1. **Government and Politics:** Of special value to the understanding of Islamic government is Sir Thomas W. Arnold, *The Caliphate* (1924). Read especially Chapter 2, "Origin of the Caliphate," Chapter 4, "Historical Survey of the Abbasid Dynasty," and Chapter 10, "The Ottomans and the Caliphate." A brief but scholarly account of the legal ideology of Islam is found in David de Santillana's essay, "Law and Society," *The Legacy of Islam*, edited by T. W. Arnold and A. Guillaume (1931).

2. **Economics:** See the essay "Geography and Commerce," *The Legacy of Islam*. Also recommended are the two books by Stanley Lane-Poole, *A History of Egypt in the Middle Ages* (1901), and *The Story of the Moors in Spain* (1886), as well as J. W. Thompson, *Economic and Social History of the Middle Ages* (1928), Chapters 7, 15, 22.

3. **Social Life and Customs:** Social conditions in Arabia prior to the advent of Islam are set forth in De Lacy O'Leary, *Arabia Before Muhammed* (1927). Lane-Poole, *A History of Egypt in the Middle Ages* and *The Story of the Moors in Spain* are excellent for their wealth of social material, while G. Le Strange, *Baghdad During the Abbasid Caliphate* (1900), Chapter 18, indicates the magnificence and wealth of the caliph's palaces. Also see H. St. John Philby, *Harun al Rashid* (1933), Chapter 4, for a brief account of the caliphate at its height.

4. **Religion:** For actual selections from the *Koran* see Robert O. Ballou, Editor, *Bible of the World* (1939), pp. 1289-1325. For those wanting a full translation of this work, see *The Meaning of the Glorious Koran*, translated by Marmaduke Pickthall (1931). An excellent brief account of Islamic theology is found in Alfred Guillaume, "Philosophy and

Theology," *Legacy of Islam*.

5. **Thought and Education:** For a full study of Moslem medicine as well as an understanding of science in general see E. G. Browne, *Arabian Medicine* (1921). Max Meyerhof, "Science and Medicine," in *The Legacy of Islam* gives a brief summary. De Lacy O'Leary, *Arabic Thought and Its Place in History*, revised edition (1939), tells about the transmission of Greek thought to western Europe via Arabic channels. Selections of Arabic poetry are found in translated form in *An Anthology of World Poetry*, edited by Mark Van Doren, (1936), pp. 80-124. Persian poetry (including selections from Hafiz) is given, pp. 125-161.

6. **Esthetic Activities:** The development of Islamic architecture and its salient features in Moorish lands, Persia, India, and China are briefly but skillfully brought out in Talbot Hamlin, *Architecture Through the Ages* (1940), pp. 193-210. See *The Legacy of Islam* for essays on Moslem architecture, minor arts, and the influence of Moslem art on European work. Moslem art is briefly analyzed also in Helen Gardner, *Art Through the Ages* (1936), Chapters 11-12.

7. **General Surveys:** The story of Islam centers largely around the life and teachings of Mohammed. For a splendid biography of the Prophet see D. S. Margoliouth, *Mohammed and the Rise of Islam*, 4th edition (1927). Especially recommended are Chapters 2, 6, and 11. The spread of Islam in Europe, western Asia, and as far as India and China is graphically set forth in T. W. Arnold, *The Preaching of Islam* (1896), Chapters 3, 6, 7, 9, 10. Exceptionally readable are Stanley Lane-Poole, *A History of Egypt in the Middle Ages*, cited above, and *The Story of the Moors in Spain*, cited above.

**8. Other References:** The Turkish penetration of Europe is discussed by William S. Davis, *A Short History of the Near East* (1922), Part III. A famous classic worth dipping into is *A Plain and Literal Translation of the*

*Arabian Nights' Entertainments*, 17 volumes. Tales and anecdotes from which many of the *Arabian Nights* originated are set forth in F. F. Arbuthnot, *Arabic Authors* (1890), Chapters 4 and 5.

## 10: The Hindu Triumph

**1. Government and Politics:** For a better understanding of the nature of legal administration in India see John H. Wigmore, *A Panorama of the World's Legal Systems* (1936), Chapter 5, pp. 211-280. The political and legal administration of the Moslem conquerors of India is briefly discussed in the *Universal World History*, edited by J. A. Hammerton (1939), Chapter 111, pp. 1787-1796. The laws of Asoka are set forth in the *Edicts of Asoka*, edited by V. A. Smith (1909). For a summary of Hindu political thought see U. N. Ghoshal, *A History of Hindu Political Theories*, 2nd edition (1927), pp. 229-243.

**2. Economics:** A fascinating aspect of Indian economic life is discussed in H. G. Rawlinson, *Intercourse Between India and the Western World*, 2nd edition (1926). See especially Chapters 5-7.

**3. Social Life and Customs:** An interesting insight into the social life of India in past centuries can be gleaned from Jean Antoine Dubois, *Hindu Manners, Customs and Ceremonies*, 3rd edition (1905). The status of women during this period is discussed in A. S. Altekar, *The Position of Women in Hindu Civilization* (1938), pp. 415-439. For social conditions in the reign of Asoka see R. K. Mookerji, *Asoka* (1928), Chapter 6.

**4. Religion:** A short description of the growth of Hinduism, especially during the period of the Guptas, is found in E. B. Havell's article in the *Universal World History*, cited above, Volume V, Chapter 81. Paul Brunton, *Indian Philosophy and Modern Culture* (1939) is a popularly written work showing the continuity of Indian religious thought down to contemporary times. See Mookerji, cited above, Chapter 6, for the religious policies of Asoka.

**5. Thought and Education:** The essays in *Legacy of India*, edited by G. T. Garratt (1937), show clearly the intellectual contributions of Hindu culture to world society. Of special interest is H. G. Rawlinson's essay, "India in European Literature and Thought." For In-

dian literature of this period see Herbert H. Gowen, *A History of Indian Literature* (1931). Indian drama is discussed on pp. 351-368; Kalidasa and his successors, pp. 369-399. The debt owed by the Arabs to the Hindus for their astronomical and mathematical knowledge is set forth in B. K. Sarkar, *Hindu Achievements in Exact Science* (1918).

**6. Esthetic Activities:** Well illustrated is V. A. Smith, *A History of Fine Art in India and Ceylon* (1911). For Asokan art, see pp. 57-65. Particularly good in its discussion of the Mauryan and Gupta periods of art is René Grousset, *The Civilization of India* (1939), pp. 83-343. Much more specialized and scholarly is Alfred C. A. Foucher, *The Beginnings of Buddhist Art, and Other Essays in Indian and Central-Asian Archaeology* (1917). Regarding Indian architecture, an excellent summary is made in Sir Banister Fletcher's volume, *A History of Architecture*, 7th edition (1924), pp. 785-805.

**7. General Surveys:** See Chapters 4-15 of Hugh G. Rawlinson, *India, A Short Cultural History* (1938), for an account of the period under discussion. V. A. Smith, *Oxford History of India* (1923), pp. 74-92, is recommended for a description of the reign of Chandragupta Maurya. See the same author's *Early History of India* (1914), pp. 49-114 for Alexander the Great's campaigns, pp. 154-195 for the reign of Asoka, and pp. 279-326 for the Gupta empire. A scholarly study of Indian-Greek relations is found in William W. Tarn's interesting book, *The Greeks in Bactria and India* (1938).

**8. Other References:** Valuable essays on Indian history of this period are to be found in H. G. Rawlinson, *Indian Historical Studies* (1913). See "Gautama Buddha," "Asoka," "Chinese Pilgrims in India," and "Ibn Battuta." A large but excellent work for the interested student to read is *On Yuan Chwang's Travels in India, 629-645 A.D.*, 2 volumes (1904-1905). For the student of literature there is recommended *Shakuntala, an Indian Drama*,

translated by A. W. Ryder (1928). Probably the finest account of Asoka and his reign is

that given by R. K. Mookerji, cited above, Chapters 1-3.

## 11: The Men of T'ang

**1. Government and Politics:** A work appropriate both for this and earlier periods is Leonard S. Hsü, *The Political Philosophy of Confucianism* (1932). See Chapter 6, "Principle of Benevolent Government," Chapter 7, "Functions of the State and Government Regulation," and Chapter 11, "Social Evolution."

**2. Economics:** See M. P. Lee, *Economic History of China* (1921), Part II, Chapter 3, on the Chin dynasty, Chapter 4, Han, Chapter 8, T'ang, Chapter 9, Sung, and Chapter 11, Mongol. The book is rich in its use of source materials and quotations. Also see E. T. Williams, *China, Yesterday and Today*, revised edition (1932), Chapter 8, "The Craftsman," and Chapter 9, "The Guilds."

**3. Social Life and Customs:** A clear and concise summary of social conditions during the T'ang dynasty is given in C. P. Fitzgerald, *China, a Short Cultural History* (1938). Also consult Marcel Granet, *Chinese Civilization* (1930), and Richard Wilhelm, *A Short History of Chinese Civilization* (1929).

**4. Religion:** The spread of Nestorian Christianity and its influence in China during the T'ang dynasty is set forth in John Foster, *The Church of the T'ang Dynasty* (1939). See Chapters 1, 2, 6, and 7. Also see E. T. Williams, cited above, Chapter 14, "Chinese Buddhism," and Chapter 15, "Taoism."

**5. Thought and Education:** This was the period in which appeared one of the world's greatest inventions—printing. A work that well repays reading is Thomas F. Carter's fascinating *The Invention of Printing in China and Its Spread Westward* (1925). *The Works of Li Po*, translated by S. Obata (1922), is perhaps the finest translation of the poetry of this favorite. Another good source for medieval Chinese poetry is Arthur Waley, *Translations from the Chinese* (1941). This is especially valuable for the poetry of Po Chu-i (772-846 A.D.), a successor of Li Po. A good summary of T'ang literature is provided in the essay by

Lionel Giles, *Universal World History*, edited by J. A. Hammerton (1939), Chapter 87. For a discussion of T'ang, Sung, and Mongol literature see Herbert A. Giles, *A History of Chinese Literature* (1931), pp. 143-287.

**6. Esthetic Activities:** See Sheldon Cheney, *A World History of Art* (1937), pp. 277-298. The materials used in the construction of Chinese and Japanese buildings are explained in Talbot Hamlin, *Architecture Through the Ages* (1940), pp. 407-417. The student will be amply repaid for studying John C. Ferguson, *Survey of Chinese Art* (1939), a work copiously illustrated. See Chapter 3, "Calligraphy," Chapter 4, "Painting," Chapter 6, "Ceramics," and Chapter 7, "Architecture."

**7. General Surveys:** This medieval period of China's history is covered adequately in C. P. Fitzgerald, cited above. Of much value also are E. T. Williams, cited above, and H. H. Gowen and J. W. Hall, *An Outline History of China* (1926), Chapters 9-15. For Japan's origins and early evolution see Frank Brinkley, *History of the Japanese People from the Earliest Times to the End of the Meiji Era* (1915). One of the finest cultural analyses of Japanese history is found in George B. Sansom, *Japan, a Short Cultural History* (1931).

**8. Other References:** A scholarly work showing culture contacts between seemingly unrelated cultures is Friedrich Hirth, *China and the Roman Orient* (1885). E. H. Parker, *A Thousand Years of the Tartars* (1924) throws light on the history of a little-known people. It is based on Chinese records of the relations between China and the Tatars previous to the conquests of Genghis Khan. There are many translations of the *Travels* of Marco Polo. One such work (1933) has an introduction by Manuel Komroff about Marco Polo and Kublai Khan. A detailed political account of the T'ang period is set forth in C. P. Fitzgerald, *Son of Heaven* (1933), the biography of Li Shih-Min, founder of the T'ang dynasty.

## 12: Castle, Manor, and Town

**1. Feudalism:** There is an article on feudalism in the *Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences*,

edited by E. R. A. Seligman, 15 volumes (1930-1935), which is short yet clear. The economic



elements in feudalism are discussed in Charles Seignobos, *The Feudal Regime* (1902), pp. 44 and following. The origins of the feudal system are discussed in G. B. Adams, *Civilization During the Middle Ages* (1914), Chapter 9, and Munro and Sellery, Editors, *Medieval Civilization* (1904), pp. 159-211. The concept of ownership in feudal land-law is discussed in Sir Paul Vinogradoff, "Customary Law," *The Legacy of the Middle Ages*, edited by G. C. Crump and E. F. Jacob (1927), pp. 289-319. Appropriate source materials on the subject will be found in A. E. Bland, P. A. Brown, and R. H. Tawney, Editors, *English Economic History; Select Documents* (1915), Part I, Section 2.

**2. Chivalry:** Chivalric ideals together with a clear and well-illustrated account of the principles of heraldry are set forth in R. B. Mowat, "Europe in the Age of Chivalry," *Universal World History*, edited by J. A. Hammerton (1939), Chapter 103, pp. 1665-1676. The orders of knighthood are discussed in the *Cambridge Medieval History*, Volume VI, Chapter 24. Medieval arms and warfare are analyzed in two articles appearing in the *Universal World History*, Chapter 102, pp. 1643-1664. A full account of this subject is given in C. W. C. Oman, *History of the Art of War in the Middle Ages*, 2 volumes (1924). Eileen Power has written an accurate essay on the position of women in medieval society in *The Legacy of the Middle Ages*, cited above. An enjoyable account of the social activities of the ruling and other classes is portrayed in L. F. Salzman, *English Life in the Middle Ages* (1927). Illustrations of castles can be found in Sir T. A. Cook, *Twenty-Five Great Houses of France* (1916). The costumes worn by our medieval ancestors are shown in Mary Evans' book, *Costume Through the Ages* (1930), Part I, Chapter 4.

**3. Manor:** A scholarly work on the subject is Sir P. G. Vinogradoff, *The Growth of the Manor*, 2nd edition (1911). A concise account of the manor is the "Manorial System" appearing in the *Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences*, cited above. J. W. Thompson, *Economic and Social History of the Middle Ages* (1928), Chapters 20, 24, and 27, is another worth-while account of manorialism. For a vivid picture of the Frankish peasant at the time of Charlemagne see Eileen Power, *Medieval People* (1939), Chapter 1. G. G. Coulton, *The Medi-*

*eval Village* (1926) has a wealth of anecdotal material on such topics as village development, Chapter 2, bans and monopolies, Chapter 6, life on a monastic manor, Chapter 8, monastic justice, Chapter 16, and "Poverty Unadorned," Chapter 22. The evolution of agriculture during the Middle Ages is discussed in N. S. B. Gras, *A History of Agriculture* (1925), Chapters 2, 4, and 5.

**4. Towns:** No better single, non-technical account of the early development of medieval commerce and town life can be given than H. Pirenne, *Medieval Cities* (1925). See especially Chapter 2 for ninth-century commerce, Chapter 3 for city origins, Chapter 4 for the revival of commerce, and Chapter 5 for the merchant class. A technical treatment is Carl Stephenson, *Borough and Town* (1933). The economic activity of medieval towns is treated in N. S. B. Gras's essay appearing in *The Legacy of the Middle Ages*, pp. 435-464. Town origins, commercial organization, and the guild system are taken up in Herbert Heaton, *Economic History of Europe* (1936), Chapters 8-11. Commerce and industry in the Middle Ages can be read in the *Cambridge Medieval History*, Volume VI, Chapters 14 and 15. The guilds are briefly treated by Eileen Power in the *Universal World History*, Chapter 101, pp. 1628-1642. L. F. Salzman in *English Industries of the Middle Ages* (1923) has chapters on medieval mining, building, metalworking, clothmaking, fishing, etc. The craft guilds are analyzed in N. S. B. Gras, *Industrial Evolution* (1930), Chapter 5. Town life is also depicted in G. G. Coulton, *Medieval Panorama* (1938), Chapter 24. The social life of the medieval town in the later Middle Ages is analyzed by Eileen Power in two studies appearing in *Medieval People*, Chapters 4 and 5.

**5. General Surveys:** A short but excellent account of material covered in this chapter is found in G. B. Adams, cited above, Chapters 7-11. Other works which are valuable for survey purposes include Carl Stephenson, *Medieval History* (1935), Chapters 9-12 and 15; Warren O. Ault, *Europe in the Middle Ages* (1937); J. W. Thompson, cited above, Chapters 25-27; D. C. Munro and G. C. Sellery, Editors, *Medieval Civilization* (1904); Achille Luchaire, *Social France at the Time of Philip Augustus* (1912), Chapters 8-12; D. C. Munro and R. J. Sontag, *The Middle Ages, 395-1500*, revised edition (1928).

### 13: Bishop, Priest, and Monk

**1. Organization of the Church:** Regarding the international organization of the Church see the *Cambridge Medieval History*, Volume VI, Chapter 16. A. C. Flick, *The Rise of the Medieval Church* (1909), Chapter 23, deals with the administrative machinery of the Church; Chapters 5, 9, and 10 study the role of the Pope, while for the sacramental system see pp. 372 and following, 592 and following. A short account of the history of monasticism is found in Ian C. Hannah, *Christian Monasticism* (1925). Canon law is the subject of an essay by Gabriel Le Bras in *The Legacy of the Middle Ages*, edited by G. C. Crump and E. F. Jacob (1927), pp. 321-361. Other works of value connected with the monastic life are R. L. Palmer, *English Monasteries in the Middle Ages* (1930), and E. C. Butler, *Benedictine Monasticism*, 2nd edition (1924). The financial aspects of the Church are very carefully analyzed in W. E. Lunt, *Papal Revenues in the Middle Ages*, 2 volumes (1934). A short treatment of the same is found in the *Cambridge Medieval History*, Volume VI, Chapter 16.

**2. Triumph of the Church:** For the investiture struggle see the *Cambridge Medieval History*, Volume V, Chapter 2, and J. W. Thompson, *Feudal Germany* (1928), Chapter 3. The political relations between the papacy and the empire are dealt with at length in T. F. Tout, *The Empire and the Papacy* (1924). It is recommended that the student look at *The Correspondence of Pope Gregory VII*, translated by Ephraim Emerton (1932). A good, short treatment of the crusades is R. A. Newhall, "The Crusades," appearing in the *Berkshire Studies in European History* (1927). Still another brief treatment is Ernest Barker, *The Crusades* (1936).

**3. The Zenith of the Church:** An account of Innocent III and his pontificate is in the *Cambridge Medieval History*, Volume VI, Chapter 1. A brief but interesting account is found in S. R. Packard, *Europe and the Church under Innocent III* (1927). Also see Carl Stephenson, *Mediaeval History* (1935), Chapters 21 and 22; H. E. Barnes, *The History of Western Civilization* (1935), Volume I, Chapter 19; and Ault, *Europe in the Middle Ages* (1937). An admirable biography of Innocent III's ward is Ernst Kantorowicz, *Frederick II, 1194-1250* (1931).

**4. The Church and Medieval Society:** A study of one of the most fascinating aspects of medieval social life is S. H. Heath, *Pilgrim Life in the Middle Ages* (1911). The importance of the Virgin Mary in the daily lives of our medieval ancestors and the growth of Mariolatry is analyzed in Henry Adams' fascinating *Mont-Saint-Michel and Chartres* (1913). The position of the Church in daily life can also be gleaned in J. J. Jusserand's work, *English Wayfaring Life in the Middle Ages*, translated by Lucy T. Smith and S. M. Brown, *Medieval Europe* (1932), Chapter 22. G. G. Coulton in *A Medieval Garner* (1910) is full of rich anecdotes relating to the religious-social psychology of medieval times. Social history has been enriched by Eileen Power's "Madame Eglentyne" appearing in *Medieval People* (1939), Chapter 3.

**5. Medieval Reform:** A study of the Inquisition by a Catholic scholar is Jean Guiraud, *The Medieval Inquisition* (1929). Perhaps the best-known work on the subject is Henry Charles Lea's monumental work, *History of the Inquisition of the Middle Ages*, 3 volumes (1888). See the *Cambridge Medieval History*, Volume VI, Chapter 21, regarding the mendicant orders, and Chapters 6 and 20 about heresies and the Inquisition. A famous biography of St. Francis of Assisi is P. Sabatier, *Life of St. Francis of Assisi* (1928), while the work of St. Francis and St. Dominic is briefly treated in Hannah, cited above.

**6. General Surveys:** Two works by Alexander C. Flick, *The Rise of the Medieval Church* (1909) and *The Decline of the Medieval Church*, 2 volumes (1930), are a comprehensive treatment of the subject, and they contain excellent bibliographies. For short studies of the rise and development of the medieval Church see Ault, cited above, Chapters 4, 9, 18, and 24; Stephenson, cited above, Chapters 4, 13, 14, 21, 22, and 27; and E. M. Hulme, *The Middle Ages* (1929), Chapters 3, 4, 16, 27, and 28. Also see, in the *Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences*, edited by E. R. A. Seligman, 15 volumes (1930-1935), the articles on "Christianity," "Conciliar Movement," and "Religious Institutions: Christian." Source materials can be examined in Robinson, *Readings in European History* (1904), Volume I, Chapters 13, 16, 17, and 21, while short anecdotes relating to the religious

and social life are in G. G. Coulton, cited above.

7. *Historical Novels*: A "yarn" about the crusades is Sir Walter Scott, *The Talisman*, a romanticized version of the Third Crusade. Another story is Harold Lamb, *The Crusaders*. A novel about the period of the Hundred

Years' War in which the heroine is Joan of Arc is that written by Andrew Lang, *A Monk of Fife*. Charles Reade, *The Cloister and the Hearth*, a novel reputedly centering about the lives of Erasmus' parents, gives a vivid picture of the social and religious concepts of the Middle Ages.

## 14: University and Cathedral

1. *Education and Universities*: One of the best-known works on the medieval university is H. Rashdall, *The Universities of Europe* (1895). Rashdall has written a short account also, in the *Cambridge Medieval History*, Volume VI, Chapter 17. A fascinating account is C. H. Haskins, *The Rise of Universities* (1923), while student letters are set forth in his *Studies in Medieval Culture* (1929), Chapter 1. See this latter work, Chapter 3, about medieval textbooks. A short account of university activities is furnished by Robert S. Rait, *Life in the Medieval University* (1931). A satisfactory short summary of medieval universities is found in W. O. Ault, *Europe in the Middle Ages* (1937), Chapter 24.

2. *Art*: Essays on medieval architecture, sculpture, and the decorative and industrial arts are in *The Legacy of the Middle Ages*, edited by G. C. Crump and E. F. Jacob (1927). Brief studies of medieval art can be read in Sheldon Cheney, *A World History of Art* (1937), Chapter 14, Gothic architecture, and Helen Gardner, *Art Through the Ages* (1936), Chapters 13 and 14. Sir T. G. Jackson, *Gothic Architecture in France, England, and Italy* (1915) is especially recommended. For a shorter treatment the student can read Talbot Hamlin, *Architecture Through the Ages* (1940), Chapters 12 and 13, Romanesque, and Chapters 14 and 15, Gothic. A good work on medieval sculpture is A. Gardner, *Medieval Sculpture in France* (1931), while a good short account is given in *The Legacy of the Middle Ages*. Stained-glass windows are treated in H. Arnold, *Stained Glass of the Middle Ages in England and France* (1926). The art of manuscript illumination is explained in J. A. Herbert, *Illuminated Manuscripts* (1911), while the subject of paleography is ably treated by E. A. Lowe in his essay on handwriting in *The Legacy of the Middle Ages*. The philosophy of medieval art is analyzed by E. Male in *Religious Art in France, Thirteenth Century*

(1913), in which he interprets the symbolism to be found in medieval art, and by Henry Adams, whose *Mont-Saint-Michel and Chartres* (1913) presents vividly the religious spirit motivating the creation of the great medieval cathedrals. The music of the Middle Ages can be best understood by reading Paul H. Lang, *Music in Western Civilization* (1941), Chapters 4-7.

3. *Literature*: See two essays in *The Legacy of the Middle Ages*, "Some Aspects of Medieval Latin Literature" and "Vernacular Literature." Latin literature is analyzed in Haskins, *Renaissance of the Twelfth Century* (1927) and *Studies in Mediaeval Culture* (1929), Chapters 5 and 6, while selections of medieval literature in the original are found in K. P. Harrington, Editor, *Mediaeval Latin* (1925), and C. H. Beeson, *A Primer of Medieval Latin* (1925). Translation of medieval poetry can be read in *An Anthology of World Poetry*, edited by Mark Van Doren (1936), pp. 454-462. J. A. Symonds, *Wine, Women, and Song* (1884) is a famous collection of Goliardic verse, while a later selection is Helen Waddell, *Medieval Latin Lyrics* (1930). The poetry and music of the troubadours and *trouvères* are carefully and clearly presented in Pierre Aubry, *Trouvères and Troubadours* (1914). A concise account of English medieval literature is in G. Sampson, *The Concise Cambridge History of English Literature* (1941), Chapters 1 and 2. The student should make it a point to read selections from the works of Dante and Chaucer (both of whom have been translated into modern English). Also see G. G. Coulton, *Medieval Panorama* (1938), Chapters 18 and 20, for a study of these two poets.

4. *Philosophy*: About the best standard work on the subject is Maurice de Wulf, *History of Medieval Philosophy*, 2 volumes (1926), while another excellent source is Henry O. Taylor, *The Medieval Mind*, 2 volumes (1927). See the chapters in Volume II on Scholasti-

cism, Chapters 35-37, Albertus Magnus, Chapter 40, Aquinas, Chapter 41, Bacon, Chapter 42. A good evaluation of Aristotle's place in medieval thought is found in Haskins, *Renaissance of the Twelfth Century*, Chapter 9. A famous biography of Abélard is Joseph McCabe, *Peter Abélard* (1901). The letters of Abélard and Héloïse are ably translated by C. K. Scott-Moncrieff in *The Letters of Abélard and Héloïse* (1926). A concise account of medieval philosophy can be found in A. K. Rogers, *A Student's History of Philosophy* (1932), pp. 187-207.

5. *Science*: By far the most scholarly works on their subject are Lynn Thorndike, *History of Magic and Experimental Science During the First Thirteen Centuries of Our Era*, 2 volumes (1923), and *History of Magic and Experimental Science in the Fourteenth and Fif-*

*teenth Centuries*, 2 volumes (1934). Still another excellent source is Haskins, *Studies in the History of Mediaeval Science* (1927). A short account of medieval science is obtained from W. T. Sedgwick and H. W. Tyler, *A Short History of Science* (1939), pp. 199-223. See Taylor, cited above, Volume II, for a chapter on Roger Bacon.

6. *General Surveys*: The best introduction to the intellectual riches of the Middle Ages is provided by C. H. Haskins, *Renaissance of the Twelfth Century*. Scholarly articles appear in the *Cambridge Medieval History*, Volume V, and *The Legacy of the Middle Ages*. Brief essays are found in the *Universal World History*, edited by J. A. Hammerton (1939), Chapters 100, 104, and 109, and in Carl Stephenson's book, *Mediaeval History* (1935), Chapters 18-20.

## 15: Nations in the Making

1. *General Treatments of Medieval European History*: H. A. L. Fisher, *A History of Europe* (1936), an interpretive volume by a famous English scholar and statesman; Warren O. Ault, *Europe in the Middle Ages* (1932), well written and scholarly; Sydney MacGilvary Brown, *Medieval Europe* (1932). The style of this book is especially pleasing. E. M. Hulme, *The Middle Ages*, revised edition (1938), is a good standard medieval history. Valuable sections on medieval France, Germany, and England may be found in G. B. Adams, *Civilization During the Middle Ages* (1922).

2. *Histories of Specific Countries*: G. M. Trevelyan, *History of England* (1927), perhaps the best one-volume survey; W. P. Hall and R. G. Albion, *A History of England and the British Empire* (1937), outstanding for its intriguing style; W. E. Lunt, *History of England* (1938), excellent for economic and constitutional development. The following works will be found useful in French history: G. B. Adams, *The Growth of the French Nation* (1896); P. Van Dyke, *The Story of France* (1928); Charles Seignobos, *History of the French People* (1933). A standard one-volume political history of Spain is C. E. Chapman, *History of Spain* (1922). R. B. Merriman, *The Rise of the Spanish Empire*, 3 volumes (1918-1925), Volume I, covers medieval Spain. G. Young, *Portugal, Old and New* (1917), and H. W. Stephens, *Portugal* (1898), are useful

studies. *Italy, Medieval and Modern*, by E. M. Jamison, C. M. Ady, K. D. Vernon, and C. S. Terry (1919) is a scholarly treatment. Students may find H. D. Sedgwick, *A Short History of Italy* (1905) less detailed and more popular in style. For Russia the following are convenient surveys: E. Nowack, *Medieval Slavdom and the Rise of Russia* (1930), and B. Pares, *A History of Russia* (1926). E. F. Henderson, *A Short History of Germany*, 2 volumes (1916), is a standard survey. For other European areas the following are standard references and not too difficult: W. D. McCracken, *The Rise of the Swiss Republic* (1901); J. Stefansson, *Denmark and Sweden, with Iceland and Finland* (1916); F. Schevill, *History of the Balkan Peninsula* (1922); W. A. Philips, *Poland* (1915); and F. H. H. von Lutzow, *Bohemia, an Historical Sketch* (1909).

3. *Historical Novels and Biographies*: Sir Charles Napier, *William the Conqueror*; Lord Lytton, *Harold*; H. F. M. Prescott, *The Unhurrying Chase*, deals with the time of Richard the Lion Heart; Lion Feuchtwanger, *The Ugly Duchess*, a novel of mid-Europe in the 14th century; Charles Reade, *The Cloister and the Hearth*, Holland, Germany, France, and Italy in the 15th century, one of the best of all historical novels; R. S. Sabatini, *Bellarion*, one of the best historical novels of this prolific writer, it deals with the *condottieri*, the Guelphs and the Ghibellines in the 15th cen-

ture; Sir Walter Scott, *Quentin Durward* deals with France and England in the 15th century; G. P. R. James, *Philip Augustus*, centers around France between 1200 and 1214, A. Conan Doyle, *Sir Nigel* and *The White Company*, famous novels of the Hundred Years' War; Victor Hugo, *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*, France under Louis XI, one of the greatest historical novels; R. Sherwood, *The Virtuous Knight*, a young Englishman goes to the crusades with Richard the Lion Heart. The following biographies throw much light on the conditions and development of medi-

eval Europe: L. F. Salzman, *Henry II*; Beatrice A. Lees, *Alfred the Great*; Edward Jenks, *Edward Plantagenet*; R. P. Dunn-Pattison, *The Black Prince*; W. H. Hutton, *Philip Augustus*; F. Perry, *St. Louis, the Most Christian King*; A. B. Paine, *Joan of Arc*; L. Allshorn, *Stupor Mundi: The Life and Times of Frederick II*; I. L. Plunkett, *Isabel of Castile*; A. C. Poole, *Henry the Lion*; W. H. Hutton, *Thomas à Becket*. A treatment of medieval statesmen is found in R. P. Dunn-Pattison, *Leading Figures in European History*. F. M. Stenton, *William the Conqueror* is a good study.

## 16: Man Is the Measure

1. *Intellectual Life*: See Henry O. Taylor, *Thought and Expression in the Sixteenth Century* (1920), Volume I, Chapter 1, "Petrarch and Boccaccio," Chapter 4, "Machiavelli," Chapter 7, "Erasmus," Chapter 13, "Rabelais." E. M. Hulme, *The Renaissance, the Protestant Revolution and the Catholic Reformation in Continental Europe* (1914), Chapter 4, and C. J. H. Hayes, *Political and Cultural History of Modern Europe* (1933), Volume I, pp. 99-110, have summaries of Humanism. *Petrarch, the First Modern Scholar and Man of Letters, a Selection from His Correspondence with Boccaccio and Other Friends*, edited and translated by J. H. Robinson and H. W. Rolfe, 2nd edition revised (1914), is an invaluable help in understanding "the first modern man." See especially Chapters 1-3. Preserved Smith, *Erasmus* (1923) is a study of the life and place in history of Erasmus. Nor should the student overlook the opportunity of examining Erasmus, *In Praise of Folly*, translated by John Wilson, edited by P. S. Allen (1913), for its brilliant satire against the limitations of contemporary religious and social thought. The ideal states of two English intellectuals, Sir Thomas More's "Utopia" and Francis Bacon's "New Atlantis" can both be found in the popularly published book *Famous Utopias* (1937), pp. 129-272. Machiavelli's *The Prince*, translated by W. K. Marriott (1925), especially Chapters 1, 7, 8, 16, 18, 21, and 26, will amply repay the reader also. The importance of printing in the quickening of thought is well brought out in Hayes, cited above, pp. 96-99. A good work on the subject is one referred to in connection with China: Thomas F. Carter, *The Invention of Printing in China and Its*

*Spread Westward* (1925). See especially pp. 180-189. There is a short article, well illustrated, on the invention and development of printing in the *Universal World History*, edited by J. A. Hammerton (1939), Chapter 112.

2. *Literature*: A good summary of Renaissance letters is found in Henry S. Lucas, *The Renaissance and the Reformation* (1934), Chapters 26 and 30. A full history of French letters is found in A. A. Tilley, *The Literature of the French Renaissance*, 2 volumes (1904), Volume I, Chapters 1, 2, 6, and 10, Volume II, Chapter 21. A compact description of English Renaissance literature can be found in George Sampson, *The Concise Cambridge History of English Literature* (1941), Chapters 3-6. See pp. 256-285 for Shakespeare. *An Anthology of World Poetry*, edited by Mark Van Doren (1936), offers some excellent translations of the poetry of Petrarch, pp. 553-561, Boccaccio, 561-564, Lorenzo de' Medici, 576-578, Michelangelo, 579-587. It is recommended that the student read some of the essays of Montaigne, Francis Bacon, and the sonnets of Shakespeare, not neglecting the latter's great plays, such as *Hamlet*, *Macbeth*, and the *Merchant of Venice*. Rabelais, *The Heroic Deeds of Gargantua and Pantagruel* is earthy but nonetheless fascinating, while Cervantes, *Don Quixote* should not go unread. Castiglione, *The Book of the Courtier* offers both an informative and delightful insight into Renaissance manners.

3. *Esthetic Activities*: Renaissance architecture is discussed adequately in Lucas, cited above, Chapters 16, 24, and 31. A fuller study is found in Talbot Hamlin, *Architecture Through the Ages* (1940). See Chapters 16 and

17 for Italy, Chapter 18 for France, Chapter 19 for northern Europe, and Chapter 20 for Spain. The book is well illustrated. The most famous source for our knowledge of Italian painters is Giorgio Vasari, *The Lives of the Painters, Sculptors, and Architects*, 4 volumes (1927). See especially his account of Leonardo da Vinci, Volume II, p. 156; Raphael, Volume II, p. 221; Andrea del Sarto, Volume II, p. 303; Michelangelo, Volume IV, p. 108; Titian, Volume IV, p. 199. In the popularly written work by Thomas Craven, *Men of Art* (1931) see Chapter 2, "Giotto," Chapter 3, "Florence," and Chapter 6, "Venice: the Courtesan City." For a good general summary of Renaissance art, see Sheldon Cheney, *A World History of Art* (1937), Chapters 17, 18, and 21. Renaissance music is discussed in Paul H. Lang, *Music in Western Civilization* (1941), Chapters 8 and 9.

4. *General Surveys*: A classic in the field is J. A. Symonds, *The Renaissance in Italy*, 2 volumes (1936). This work should be corrected by reading the work of modern scholars,

however. A general account of the Renaissance is Henry S. Lucas, cited above, Book I. The intellectual achievements of the period are given by Taylor, cited above, Volume I. For the early stages of the Renaissance, especially, see W. T. Waugh, *History of Europe from 1378 to 1494* (1932), Chapter 21. Brief and general essays on the significance of the Renaissance are found in J. W. Thompson and others, *The Civilization of the Renaissance* (1929). Short articles on Renaissance thought and life can also be found in the *Universal World History*, Chapters 112-114, 117, 121, 122, and 124.

5. *Other References*: One of the most famous autobiographies written is Benvenuto Cellini's (published in many editions). A worth-while historical novel is Dmitri Merezhkowski, *The Romance of Leonardo da Vinci*; perhaps even better is to examine da Vinci's wonderful *Notebooks*, filled with his extraordinary drawings and showing both his scientific curiosity and inventive genius. See Edward McCurdy, *Leonardo da Vinci's Notebooks*.

## 17: The Ninety-Five Theses

1. *Background of the Revolt*: Alexander C. Flick, *The Decline of the Medieval Church*, 2 volumes (1930), is a thorough treatment of the subject. Volume I gives detailed accounts of the Babylonian Captivity and the Great Schism; Volume II describes the various Church councils and the failure of the Conciliar Movement. Shorter studies of the background of the Revolt can be found in the *Cambridge Modern History*, Volume I, Chapters 18 and 19, Volume II, Chapter 2. The decline of the medieval Church is treated in brief fashion in Edward P. Cheyney, *The Dawn of a New Era, 1250-1453* (1936), Chapter 6, and Henry S. Lucas, *The Renaissance and the Reformation* (1934), Chapters 4-7.

2. *The Religious Revolt*: A. Lutheranism. An excellent biography of Luther is Preserved Smith, *The Life and Letters of Martin Luther* (1914). See especially Chapters 1, 5, 6, 14, 29, 30, 32, and 37. Good accounts of the rise of Lutheranism can be found in Lucas, cited above, Chapters 32-36, and Preserved Smith, *The Age of the Reformation* (1920), Chapter 2.

B. Calvinism. A study of the founder of Calvinism is presented by G. E. Harkness, *John Calvin; the Man and His Ethics* (1931).

A good short account of the Geneva reformer is found in H. O. Taylor, *Thought and Expression in the Sixteenth Century* (1920), Volume I, Chapter 17. The development of Calvinism is indicated in Lucas, cited above, Chapters 43-46, and Smith, *The Reformation*, Chapters 3, 4, and 7. Recommended is Calvin's own *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, translated by H. Beveridge (1845-1846). Also look into John Knox, *The History of the Reformation in Scotland* (1899).

C. Anglican Revolt. See Lucas, cited above, Chapter 40; Smith, *The Reformation*, Chapter 6; *Cambridge Modern History*, Volume II, Chapters 13 and 14. An interesting work to read in connection with the Revolt in England is Geoffrey Baskerville, *English Monks and the Suppression of the Monasteries* (1937). Also see Francis Hackett, *Henry the Eighth* (1929), pp. 295 and following.

D. Catholic Reformation. See Hayes, cited above, pp. 183-190; Smith, cited above, Chapter 8; Lucas, cited above, Chapters 47-52. A brief essay on the Jesuits and their activities is found in the *Universal World History*, edited by J. A. Hammerton (1939), Chapter 128.

**3. Political Consequences:** For a study of the subject, consult R. H. Murray, *Political Consequences of the Reformation* (1926). See Chapter 2, "Luther," Chapter 3, "Calvin," and Chapter 5, "Calvin's Disciples." The subject of religious wars is discussed in the *Universal World History*, cited above, Chapter 125, "Nationalism and Despotism," Chapter 126, "The Thirty Years' War," Chapter 130, "Cromwell and the Puritans." The student should also consult Hayes, cited above, Chapter 5, regarding the political consequences of the Revolt.

**4. Other Results:** The problem of witchcraft and its suppression is treated at length in Preserved Smith, *A History of Modern Culture*, Volume I, *The Great Renewal* (1930), Chapter 14; and a brief account is furnished in the *Universal World History*, Chapter 115. Possibly the best economic interpretation of the Protestant Revolt is R. H. Tawney, *Religion and the Rise of Capitalism* (1926). See especially Chapter 2, "The Continental Reformers," and Chapter 4, "The Puritan Movement." The intellectual aspects are analyzed

by Karl Pearson, *The Ethics of Free Thought* (1901), Chapter 9; *Cambridge Modern History*, Volume II, Chapter 19; Smith, *The Reformation*, Chapters 12 and 13; H. E. Barnes, *The History of Western Civilization* (1935), Volume I, pp. 865-873.

**5. General Surveys:** The Religious Revolt in its political, religious, social, and intellectual phases is discussed in Preserved Smith, *The Age of the Reformation* (1920). Another work, shorter, which concerns itself particularly with the intellectual aspects, is Charles Beard, *The Reformation of the Sixteenth Century in Its Relation to Modern Thought and Knowledge* (1927). For the deterioration of the medieval Church, see Edward P. Cheyney, *The Dawn of a New Era, 1250-1453* (1936), Chapter 6, and Henry S. Lucas, *The Renaissance and the Reformation* (1934), Chapters 4-7. For a good treatment of the Religious Revolt as a whole, see Lucas, cited above, Book II. A good single-chapter analysis is C. J. H. Hayes, *A Political and Cultural History of Modern Europe* (1933), Volume I, Chapter 4.

## 18: To the Ends of the Earth

**1. Geographical Discoveries:** An account of the era of exploration and discovery is set forth in W. C. Abbott, *The Expansion of Europe* (1924), Volume I, Chapters 3, 6, and 9; E. P. Cheyney, *The European Background of American History, 1300-1600* (1904), Chapters 1-6. A scholar writes about a famous figure in the history of exploration in Sir C. R. Beazley, *Prince Henry the Navigator* (1908). A primary source of value is *The Letters of Hernando Cortez*, translated by J. Bayard Niorris (1929). A most readable account of the rounding of the Cape of Good Hope, the first journeys to India, and the characters of such men as Vasco da Gama, d'Albuquerque, and St. Francis Xavier, is found in K. G. Jayne, *Vasco da Gama and His Successors, 1460-1580* (1910).

**2. New World Civilizations:** A good study of the Chaco Canyon and Mesa Verde cultures can be obtained from Edgar L. Hewett, *Ancient Life in the American Southwest* (1930). A brief but reliable history of the Aztecs and Mayans is found in Herbert J. Spinden, *Ancient Civilizations of Mexico and Central America* (1922). The work is well illustrated. Spinden's article, "The Population of Ancient America," *Annual Report of the*

*Smithsonian Institution* (1929), pp. 451-471, is valuable for the probable size of these Central American cultures. The Inca civilization is briefly described in the *Universal World History*, edited by J. A. Hammerton (1929), Chapter 119. Amerind art is analyzed in Helen Gardner, *Art Through the Ages* (1936), Chapter 23, and for a discussion of Amerind architecture see Talbot Hamlin, *Architecture Through the Ages* (1940), pp. 93-107. For a survey of the Spanish colonial empire established in these lands, see H. E. Bolton and T. M. Marshall, *Colonization of North America, 1492-1783* (1920), Chapters 2 and 3.

**3. Europe Invades the East:** A. Portugal. Of particular value for its sections on methods of warfare, voyages, piracy is R. S. Whiteway, *The Rise of Portuguese Power in India, 1497-1550* (1899). J. Allen, *The Cambridge Shorter History of India* (1934), Part III, Chapter 1, describes the advent of the Portuguese in India. Also see G. Nye Steiger, *A History of the Far East* (1936), Chapter 15, regarding the Portuguese in India, Chapter 16 for the Portuguese and Spaniards in Malaysia and Indo-China.

**3. Holland.** A full account of the history

of Dutch governmental control in Java is given in Clive Day, *The Policy and Administration of the Dutch in Java* (1904). Regarding the Dutch in India, see Allen, cited above, Part III, Chapter 1; for the Dutch in the Far East, see Steiger, cited above, Chapter 19.

c. England. The establishment of the English East India Company over Dutch and Portuguese rivalry is shown in Edward Thompson and G. T. Garratt, *Rise and Fulfillment of British Rule in India* (1934), Chapters 1-4. See Allen, cited above, Part III, Chapter 2, for a full account of the policy and administration of the English East India Company for the period 1600-1740. For a short account of English activity in the Far East, see Steiger, cited above, Chapter 19. Part III, Chapter 3, describes the final struggle between England and France for supremacy in India.

d. Russia. The significance of the Russian advance across northern Asia to the Pacific is presented in Steiger, cited above, Chapter 20.

4. *The Mogul Empire*: A fascinating source material for the reign of Babur, the founder of the Mogul empire, is *The Memoirs of Babur*, translated by Leyden and Erskine, edited by Sir Lucas King (1921). The foundation, climax, and decline of the Mogul empire is given in H. G. Rawlinson, *India, A Short Cultural History* (1938), Chapters 16-19. A fine essay on Akbar appears in H. G. Rawlinson, *Indian Historical Studies* (1913). Mogul art, well illustrated, is discussed in René Grousset, *The Civilization of India*, translated by C. A. Phillips (1939), pp. 344-390. The "Divine Faith," Akbar's own religious creation, is well summarized in Stanley Lane-Poole,

*Medieval India under Mohammedan Rule* (1903), pp. 275-282. Two scholarly economic studies on the period are by William H. Moreland: *India at the Death of Akbar* (1920) and *From Akbar to Aurangzeb* (1923). A short discussion of India under the Moguls appears in the *Universal World History*, Chapter 131.

5. *China and Japan*: See Steiger, cited above, Chapter 17, for a good summary of Japan from the fourteenth century to the exclusion of the foreigners, and Chapter 18 regarding China under the Mings. Also see Lionel Giles' article on the Mings in the *Universal World History*, Chapter 123. For a scholarly account of Japan's political and cultural evolution during this period consult G. B. Sansom, *Japan, A Short Cultural History* (1931), Chapters 17-21. A worth-while, brief work whose subject is concerned with the Japanese code of knightly ethics is that written by Inazo Nitobe, *Bushido, the Soul of Japan* (1911).

6. *General Surveys*: Medieval contacts between Europe and Asia are discussed in A. P. Newton, Editor, *Travel and Travellers in the Middle Ages* (1926). The finest work in its field is Sir C. R. Beazley, *The Dawn of Modern Geography*, 3 volumes (1905-1906). Another excellent work is J. N. L. Baker, *History of Geography and Exploration* (1932), while an interesting and concise treatment is J. E. Gillespie, *History of Geographical Discovery, 1400-1800* (1933). The commercial aspects of the era of discovery are summarized in Clive Day, *History of Commerce* (1938), Part III. Brief articles appear in the *Universal World History*, Chapters 117, 119, and 120.



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## 1: The Universe, the Earth, and Man

### Specific References

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2. Sir Arthur Keith, *The Antiquity of Man*, J. B. Lippincott Company, 1925, p. 116, and London, Williams and Norgate, Ltd.
3. From Ernest A. Hootan, *Up from the Ape*, 1931, p. 314. By permission of The Macmillan Company, publishers.
4. J. T. Shotwell, *The History of History*, Columbia University Press, 1939, I, p. 63.

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For the nature of the universe and geologic processes: Charles Schuchert and Carl O. Dunbar, *A Textbook of Geology*, John Wiley and Sons, 1933; William C. Krumbein and C. G. Croneis, *Down to Earth*, University of Chicago Press, 1936; H. H. Newman, Ed., *The Nature of the World and of Man*, University of Chicago Press, 1926. There is also much material easily available in H. G. Wells, *The Outline of History*, 4 vols., The Mac-

millan Company, 1924, which the authors found helpful. For early man the authors relied mainly on the following standard works: George Grant MacCurdy, *Human Origins*, D. Appleton-Century Company, 1924; M. C. Burkitt, *Our Early Ancestors*, The Macmillan Company, 1929; H. F. Osborn, *Men of the Old Stone Age*, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1923; Ernest A. Hootan, *Up from the Ape*, The Macmillan Company, 1931; Sir Arthur Keith, *The Antiquity of Man*, J. B. Lippincott Company, 1925. On the nature and significance of culture and cultural processes in history, much helpful information was found in: Wilson D. Wallis, *Culture and Progress*, McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1930; James H. S. Bossard, Ed., *Man and His World*, Harper & Brothers, 1932; Clark Wissler, *Man and Culture*, Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1923. The discussion of primitive society owes much to Dr. Diedrich Westermann's volume, *The African Today and Tomorrow*, London, Oxford University Press, 1939; G. G. Brown and A. M. Hutt, *Anthropology in Action*, London, Oxford University Press, 1935; Alexander Goldenweiser, *Anthropology*, F. S. Crofts & Co., 1937.

## 2: The Nile, the Tigris, and the Euphrates

### Specific References

1. Stanley Casson, *Progress of Archaeology*, Whitteley House, McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1934, p. 28.
2. James H. Breasted, *A History of Egypt*, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1905, p. 242.
3. James H. Breasted, *Dawn of Conscience*, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1934, p. 208.
4. Breasted, *History of Egypt*, p. 89.
5. Adolf Erman, *Life in Ancient Egypt*, 1894, p. 389. By permission of The Macmillan Company, publishers.
6. Albert A. Trever, *History of Ancient Civilization*, Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1936, I, p. 50.
7. James H. Breasted, *The Development of Re-*

ligion and Thought in Ancient Egypt, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1912, p. 324.

8. Quoted by Trever, p. 24.
9. Quoted by G. A. Dorsey, *The Story of Civilization*, Halcyon House, Blue Ribbon Books, 1937, p. 328. Reprinted by permission of Harper & Brothers.
10. Quotations from Hammurabic code are taken from Robert Francis Harper, *The Code of Hammurabi*, University of Chicago Press, 1904.
11. M. I. Rostovtzeff, *A History of the Ancient World*, 2nd ed., Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1936, I, p. 132.
12. *Ecclesiastes* 12: 1-7.
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14. Quoted by Dorsey, p. 333. Reprinted by permission of Harper & Brothers.
15. James H. Breasted, *Ancient Times*, 2nd ed., Ginn and Company, 1935, p. 204.
16. *Ibid.*, p. 277.

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above covered the area of both the Nile and Mesopotamia. On Egypt, J. H. Breasted, *A History of Egypt*, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1905, was indispensable. For Mesopotamia the authors are indebted to H. R. Hall, *The Ancient History of the Near East*, London, Methuen and Company, 1932; Charles L. Woolley, *The Sumerians*, London, Oxford University Press, 1928; A. T. E. Olmstead, *History of Assyria*, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1923. For an overall interpretation of historical developments in Egypt and Mesopotamia, the authors relied heavily on M. I. Rostovtzeff, *A History of the Ancient World*, I, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1936.

## 3: The Indus and the Ganges

### Specific References

1. Cf. H. G. Rawlinson, *India, A Short Cultural History*, D. Appleton-Century Company, 1938, pp. 13-18, for a concise summary of this civilization.
2. Cf. Stanley Rice, *Hindu Customs and Their Origin*, London, George Allen and Unwin, 1937, pp. 35-132, for an analysis of caste theories.
3. J. Takakusu, Trans., *Buddhist Religion*, Oxford University Press, 1896, p. 182.
4. Quoted by Will Durant, *The Story of Civilization*, Simon and Schuster, 1935, I, p. 414.
5. F. Max Müller, *Chips from a German Workshop*, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1872, I, pp. 76-77.
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Appleton-Century Company, 1938; and also consulted René Grousset, *The Civilization of India*, trans. from French by C. A. Phillips, Tudor Publishing House, 1939. The most authoritative study of the unearthing of the Indus valley civilization was found in the work edited by Sir John Marshall, *Mohenjo-daro and the Indus Civilization*, 3 vols., London, Arthur Probsthain, 1931. An excellent treatment of the early Indo-Aryan peoples was found in R. Mookerji, *Hindu Civilization*, Longmans, Green and Company, 1936, which also gave a good résumé of the teachings of the Buddha. N. K. Sidhanta, *The Heroic Age of India*, Alfred A. Knopf, 1930, pointed out similarities in the Indian and Greek heroic ages, while Gilbert Slater was invaluable for indicating *The Dravidian Element in Indian Culture*, London, Ernest Benn, 1924. The authors relied heavily for an analysis of the caste system upon Stanley Rice, *Hindu Customs and Their Origin*, London, George Allen and Unwin, 1937. Will Durant in *The Story of Civilization*, I, Simon and Schuster, 1935, was of great assistance in his presentation of the high lights of Indian philosophy, as were Arthur Berriedale Keith, *The Religion and Philosophy of the Veda and Upanishads*, 2 vols., Harvard University Press, 1925; and the famous essays of F. Max Müller, *Chips from a German Workshop*, I, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1872. Of genuine help in the intellectual, literary, and artistic fields was the *Legacy of India*, ed. by Geoffrey Theodore Garratt, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1937.

## 4: The Wei and the Hwang Ho

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2. H. H. Gowen and J. W. Hall, *An Outline*

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Quoted by Gowen and Hall, p. 41.

Edward Thomas Williams, *A Short History of*

- China*, 1928, p. 50. Reprinted by permission of Harper & Brothers.
5. Gowen and Hall, p. 56.
  6. Creel, pp. 311-312.
  7. Cf. Williams, pp. 72-76, for a good account of the status of women and the marriage problem.
  8. Quoted by Will Durant, *The Story of Civilization*, Simon and Schuster, 1935, I, p. 646.
  9. Cf. C. P. Fitzgerald, *China, A Short Cultural History*, D. Appleton-Century Company, 1938, pp. 121-132, for a discussion of jade art and its significance.
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# General Index

For the convenience of the reader the outstanding references have been put in boldface type whenever it was possible and practical to do so.

Suggested pronunciations for difficult or unusual words are respelled according to the table below, which is repeated in simplified form at the bottom of each right hand page of the *Index*. The mark ' is placed after a syllable with primary or strong accent; the mark ˈ shows a secondary or light accent, as in *civilization* (siv' i- li za' tion).

The local pronunciations of many foreign words are too unusual for persons untrained in linguistics, and the aim has therefore been to provide pronunciations commonly acceptable in unaffected, educated American speech.

a hat, cap	j jam, enjoy
ā age, face	k kind, seek
ā care, air	l land, coal
ā father, far	m me, am
	n no, in
b bad, rob	ng long, bring
ch child, much	o hot, rock
d did, red	ō open, go
	ō order, all
e let, best	oi oil, voice
ē equal, see	ou house, out
ēr term, learn	
	p paper, cup
f fat, if	r run, try
g go, bag	s say, yes
h he, how	sh she, rush
	t tell, it
i it, pin	th thin, both
ī ice, five	th then, smooth

u cup, butter
ū full, put
ū rule, move
ū use, music

v very, save
w will, woman
y you, yet
z zero, breeze
zh measure, seizure

ə represents:

a in about
e in taken
i in pencil
o in lemon
u in circus

## FOREIGN SOUNDS

y as in French du. Pronounce ē with the lips rounded as for English ū in rule.

œ as in French peu. Pronounce ā with the lips rounded as for ō.

N as in French bon. The N is not pronounced, but shows that the vowel before it is nasal.

H as in German ach. Pronounce k without closing the breath passage.

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hat, äge, cäre, fär; let, equal, term; it, ice; hot, open, order; oil, out; cūp, püt, rüle, üse; ch, child; ng, long;  
 th, thin; ʒh, then; zh, measure; ə represents a in about, e in taken, i in pencil, o in lemon, u in circus.

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hat, āge, cāre, fār; let, ēqual, tērm; it, Ice; hot, ōpen, ōrder; oil, out; cūp, pūt, rūle, ūse; ch, child; ng, long; th, thin; ññ, then; zh, measure; ə represents *a* in about, *e* in taken, *i* in pencil, *o* in lemon, *u* in circus.

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hat, āge, cāre, fār; let, ēqual, tērm; it, īce; hot, ōpen, ōrder; oil, out; ōup, pūt, rūle, ūse; ch, child; ng, long; th, thin; ʔh, then; zh, measure; ə represents a in about, e in taken, i in pencil, o in lemon, u in circus.



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hat, āge, cāre, fār; let, ēqual, tērm; it, Ice; hot, ōpen, ōrder; oil, out; cūp, pūt, rūle, ūse; ch, child; ng, long;  
 th, thīn; ʒh, then; zh, measure; ə represents *a* in about, *e* in taken, *i* in pencil, *o* in lemon, *u* in circus.

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hat, āge, cāre, fār; let, ēqual, tērm; it, Ice; hot, ōpen, ōrder; oil, out; ōp, pūt, rŭle, ūse; ch, child; ng, long; th, thin; th, then; zh, measure; ə represents *a* in about, *e* in taken, *i* in pencil, *o* in lemon, *u* in circus.



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hat, äge, cäre, fär; let, equal, term; it, Ice; hot, öpen, öder; oil, out; cup, püt, rüle, üse; ch, child; ng, long;  
 th, thin; ʒh, then; zh, measure; ə represents a in about, e in taken, i in pencil, o in lemon, u in circus.

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hat, āge, cāre, fār; let, ēqual, tērm; it, īce, hot, ōpen, ōrder; oil, out; ūp, pūt, rīle, ūse; ch, child; ng, long;  
 th, thin; ʔh, then; zh, measure; ə represents a in about, e in taken, i in pencil, o in lemon, u in circus.

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